

The Legend of
KING KONG

by

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Final draft

THE LEGEND OF KING KONG

FADE IN

1 EXT. PET SHOP - WEST 57TH STREET - NIGHT 1

The store window is trimmed in tinsel and silver balls and colored lights, the letters "Merry Christmas" draped across a cardboard Santa Claus and across a diapered cardboard baby the numbers of the incoming year "1933."

Divided into two parts, in the larger one, puppies, in the smaller part, a capuchin monkey rolling and swinging and tumbling through the excelsior with joyous abandon in response to a pretty set of fingers who tap and rap and wiggle against the glass. Suddenly a hand reaches in from the store side of the shop, lifts the monkey out, tucks him into a portable cage and hands it to a 12-year-old girl who beams up at her mother, a Park Avenue matron busy fishing in her pocketbook for cash.

2 REVERSE ANGLE - FINGERS 2

Frozen on the glass, they belong to Ann Darrow, in her mid-twenties, a lean and delicate beauty to her, a cloche and a permanent frazzled at the edge, a dickie and a shirtwaist and a faille skirt whose hem sags slightly, the run-down edges of a depths-of-the-depression lovely whose hollow cheeks and black circles reveal not a model, but an actress who hasn't eaten for a day.

She watches ruefully as the monkey heads east with its new owners, now she rises from her stooping position at the window, heads in the other direction, into the smoky scurry of the 5 PM Saturday shopping crowd.

3 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN 3

Striding purposefully west, but we can see, with no real destination as she passes fur shops and dress shops, painfully checking them out of the corner of her eye, and now Charles & Co., the fruiterer, just in time to see half a dozen Golden Delicious lifted from their red tissue beds, and then a bottle of marrons whose cap is quickly unscrewed and one of the contents popped into a mink-hatted mouth.

She pushes on, past more apples, but this time the fruit is on the curb side, sitting in shallow boxes which are slung over the shoulders of vacant-eyed fedoraed men, their over-coats pulled up against the Christmas cold which seeps in from the street, and out from the decorated store windows.

4

EXT. CARNEGIE HALL

4

Ann walking by posters which read "Paderewski," "New York Philharmonic, A. Toscanini, Conductor," "Tuesday, Mary Baker Eddy Lectures" and still another "Journey to Adventure with Carl Denham," a banner "Today!" pasted across the last.

On the corner by the newsstand, is Weston, a theatrical agent, slashing through a copy of Variety he has just bought, pausing momentarily to crack a chestnut, also just purchased from a huddled vendor on the corner stoking coals under a pan.

5

ON ANN

5

Watching the vendor adjust his chestnuts carefully, turning them over one-by-one, Ann swallowing, almost salivating, her trance suddenly distracted by Weston's shells pitching down on the sidewalk beside the Vendor. One has not been completely eaten, she fixes on it, and now Weston, having checked the grosses, tosses Variety into the corner trash basket, and hustles through the Carnegie Hall stage door.

Ann waits until Weston has cleared, now she stoops for the half-eaten chestnut, and in the same one smooth motion, snatches the Variety out of the mesh basket, and her shoulders straight, heads on down Seventh Avenue, popping the remains of the one chestnut into her mouth.

6

INT. CARNEGIE HALL

6

In the darkness and through the rustle, a voice booms off a movie screen competing with frenetic music scoring the death duel between a cobra and a mongoose.

DENHAM (o.s.)

'And so this remarkably agile little mammal gets its prey again. He darts in for the kill....'

It is a stunning duel, something today's audiences are long used to, but the footage is good, the exposures are clean, and the camera is in close. But the music underlines every bite and wriggle.

DENHAM (o.s.)

'The hapless cobra spreads its hood one last time, the mongoose strikes just below the sac where the reptile is most vulnerable, and it is all over.'

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED

6

The dead cobra is circled by the mongoose, now he picks him up, scurries off with the snake in its mouth, the camera tilts up to the Himalayas, the sun makes a last halation, and the end flashes and bleeds out.

The audience applauds and the spotlight comes down again on the host, Carl Denham, standing beside a piano, wearing a bush jacket, safari jodphurs, puttees. There is still at once an air of authority and terrible tension about Denham's macho, perverse, but with a kind of dynamism to him, he speaks every sentence as if it ended with an exclamation point.

DENHAM

And it is all over for us too, old friends, for this season! But for this season only! Because next year I will be back with an attraction that I promise you will be too big for this hall, too big even for Radio City, too big for any one movie theatre in the country!

A Kid yells up from the front row.

KID

Carl! Carl! What is it?!

HEARING AID

Tell us, Carl!

Denham smiles down benevolently on this audience who for years have been his stock-in-trade.

DENHAM

Friends, I can't tell you because I haven't found it yet. But I'm on my way to find it, and when I find it I'm going to film it. And then I promise you, my loyal audience, I will bring it back and you, my friends, and the rest of the world will be breaking down the doors of every movie palace on all five continents to see it.

KID

What is it, Carl?!

BALCONY

C'm'on, Carl, where are you going?!

CONTINUED

6 CONTINUED - 2

6

Denham smiles enigmatically, lifts a firm jaw and a steady gaze to the gallery.

DENHAM

To the end of the earth and back!
But we will meet again -- and where
will we meet, my friends? Where?
Where?

Denham winds them up.

DENHAM

On our....

Now he cues them.

AUDIENCE

Journey to Adventure!!!

Denham throws the crowd a fist of approval and runs o.s. to jungle drums and Peruvian flutes.

7 TREASURER'S OFFICE

7

Denham charges through the wire mesh cage, a Dresser behind him wipes off his makeup, at the same time peels off Denham's bush jacket, throws an attachable-collar shirt on him, now pushes Denham out the door, Weston running to catch up, dragging behind him two bulging suitcases splattered with frayed labels, plus a long box like a rifle case.

8 EXT. CARNEGIE HALL - NIGHT

8

Weston still struggling a half-step behind.

WESTON

Carl! Carl!

Denham ignores Weston, jumps into the street, lets go a two-fingers-in-the-mouth blast which brings all the traffic to a standstill.

WESTON

Aren't you going to say good-bye?

DENHAM

Good-bye, Eddie. Kiss the Missus and stay away from the horses.

CONTINUED

8

CONTINUED

8

WESTON

Don't take any wooden nickels, Carl.

DENHAM

I'm not interested in nickels.

Denham grabs his bags and the box from Weston and leaps into the nearest cab as the Driver guns his motor.

WESTON

(yelling over
the noise)

I forgot to tell you!

But the cab roars off down the Avenue, Weston still screaming through cupped hands.

WESTON

We did thirty-three hundred dollars
today, Carl! ---

A window rolls down in the cab.

DENHAM

Next year ---

Denham's voice booms back through the traffic.

DENHAM

Thirty-three million!!

-- The cab disappearing into the Seventh Avenue crush.

CUT TO

9

EXT. HOBOKEN DOCK - NIGHT

9

The fog rolling in, a tramp steamer berthed, on its hull the letters "Panama Queen." The place is bustling with activity, the dock lights cutting through the night, lighting up crew members moving up and down the planks with heavy equipment, crates, a feverish last-minute pace.

On the dock, at the foot of one of the planks, a heated discussion is taking place, the scurrying crewmen moving like shadows past the participants who are Jack Driscoll, the First Mate, a sinewy man in his thirties, an air of mystery about him, a scar on his cheek. Driscoll speaks with a Dutch accent. With him is the master of the ship, Captain Englehorn, a stumpy, barnacled, ocean-going veteran, listening defens-ively to the Harbor master.

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9

HARBOR MASTER

I will not sign your papers. You've got explosives on board. Weapons, ammunition. You've got a tired 10-knot tramp steamer loaded down with twice the crew she normally takes. You sail and the insurance company has my ass tomorrow and the Fire Marshal the day after.

10

ANOTHER ANGLE

10

A taxi pulling up near the foot of the dock, Denham jumping out, negotiating the fare and the tip, but all the time his ear is cocked to the discussion going on at the foot of the plank.

DRISCOLL

Last year there was no difficulty.
Weapons, ammo ---

HARBOR MASTER

Last year was different.

ENGLEHORN

How?!

HARBOR MASTER

There was a different Harbor master
I'm shutting you down -- until you
clear your cargo and lighten your
crew.

ENGLEHORN

No piss-ant civil servant's going
to keep the Panama Queen from
sailing.

DENHAM

(shouting up)
Oh yes he will!

Denham has materialized at the foot of the dock, a crewman hustling his bags up behind the Harbor master.

DENHAM

(to Englehorn)
Hello, Captain, and watch your
language.

CONTINUED

10 CONTINUED

10

DENHAM (Cont'd)

(nods to Driscoll)

Driscoll, get aboard, see about
the gear I sent over with Mullins.
Captain, those papers my lawyer
sent over need your signature.

Denham moves off to one side with the Harbor Master as Driscoll
and Englehorn keep their distance, then drift back up on the
ship.

DENHAM

You were old Swenson's assistant.

HARBOR MASTER

That's right. He's retired.

DENHAM

Saw you last year. Helped us
through customs.

HARBOR MASTER

Right again. The contraband --
the plants. I'm real sorry about
this, Mister Denham, but a rule's
a rule. And thanks for being so
understanding.

DENHAM

Not at all -- what was your name
again?

HARBOR MASTER

Milliken.

DENHAM

What Milliken?

HARBOR MASTER

George.

DENHAM

George -- one of the things I've
always found wrong with this
country is how little they regard
their public servants. Army, Navy,
Merchant Marine.

HARBOR MASTER

You're goddam right. Swenson had
to sweat forty years and all he's
got to show for it is five grand
retirement pay.

CONTINUED

10 CONTINUED - 2

10

DENHAM

Poor old Swede. Counting the goddam pennies. I can see him now -- what with Christmas coming and everything.

The Harbor master stops, looks Denham in the eye. Almost imperceptibly, Denham's arm comes around the Harbor master's shoulder, starts leading him away from the ship.

DENHAM

Got any kids, George?

HARBOR MASTER

A girl, nine.

DENHAM

Perfect.

He reaches in his pocket, pulls out a little Polynesian doll, hands it to him.

DENHAM

Had this in my suitcase. Brought it back from Samoa, last trip. It's quite rare.

HARBOR MASTER

I couldn't take this, Mr. Denham ---

DENHAM

George, I insist. After all, you could have fined us for violating the rules of the port.

HARBOR MASTER

That's a fact.

DENHAM

Notice, George, how they make the skirt -- out of dried copra leaves.

The Harbor master turns it over.

DENHAM

Feel them. Go ahead.

The Harbor master reaches under, a five hundred dollar bill comes out, the Harbor master swallows.

CONTINUED

10 CONTINUED - 3

10

DENHAM

George, me and the crew want you
to have a Merry Christmas.

The Harbor master breathes deep, debating.

DENHAM

And also that little nine-year-old,
what's her name?

HARBOR MASTER

Vicki.

DENHAM

Vicki.

The Harbor master, clutches the bill.

HARBOR MASTER

Be out of here tonight.

DENHAM

You bet, kid.

Denham is already going.

HARBOR MASTER

If you're not out of here tonight,
I'm turning you in to the Coast
Guard.

DENHAM

(over his shoulder)
We're on our way. And give my
regards to Swenson. He's got nine
of those dolls.

And Denham is gone, like lightning, a powerful walk and he is
up the plank, almost bowling Englehorn over.

DENHAM

Prepare to sail, Skipper.

ENGLEHORN

What the hell are you talking about?!

The Harbor master won't release us.

DENHAM

I'll tell you about it in Sumatra.
Now move, Skipper! We got to go!

CONTINUED

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10

10 CONTINUED - 4

10

And he's down the deck. Driscoll smiles at Englehorn.

ENGLEHORN

What a pirate!

Englehorn laughs.

DRISCOLL

(through the
bullhorn)

Prepare for departure! Departure
at 0300 hours!

Denham wheels around the deck, almost bowls over Mullins,
a Crew Member.

MULLINS

There's a guy waiting in your
cabin, Mister Denham. Been there
two hours.

DENHAM

Get another doll out of my
suitcase, Mullins.

And he clatters down a gangway into his cabin.

11 INT. DENHAM'S CABIN

11

Denham explodes through the door, sees a man sitting on the
bunk, a hairline moustache and a sporty overcoat. His
name is Yeager, he's an agent.

DENHAM

You?

YEAGER

I've got some news for you, Carl.

DENHAM

Good news?

Yeager shrugs noncommittally -- wig-wags his hand.

DENHAM

What is this, Charley? This tub
sails in two hours and your client's
supposed to be on it. Where's my
girl? I want my girl!

Yeager lights a cigar, looks through the window at the
New York skyline. Denham tracks him carefully.

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED

11

YEAGER

She's right across the river at
the Manhattan Hotel.

DENHAM

The Manhattan Hotel!?

YEAGER

That's the good news.

DENHAM

She wants more money.

YEAGER

That's the bad.

Denham smiles, takes a seat on the cabin chair, watches Yeager.

DENHAM

How much more money?

YEAGER

Fifty dollars a week. Plus she
wants a thousand dollar bonus
on completion of the job.

DENHAM

You want or she wants?

YEAGER

I'm her agent. I want it one
tenth as much as she wants it.
Of course I'm not playing the
part.

DENHAM

You're a bastard, Charlie.

YEAGER

True. But I've got a hundred
and ten pounds of dynamite across
the river at the Manhattan Hotel.

DENHAM

Leave it there.

YEAGER

I thought you might say that.
Look, Carl, you're going off for
six months, you're putting my
girl on a boat with a bunch of
hooligans, you're taking her in
the jungle with lions and tigers ---

CONTINUED

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12

11

CONTINUED - 2

11

DENHAM

No lions and no tigers.

YEAGER

All right, so they boil her in a pot with elephant bones. The point is, it's not like she's down in one singing 'Ballin' the Jack.' It's dangerous, Carl. I see peril. Sheer peril. And I want Francine compensated.

DENHAM

You've got me over a barrel, huh, Charley?

YEAGER

I don't like to think of things that way.

DENHAM

Let me tell you how I like to think of things. That if I make a deal it's a deal. That no nickel and dime flesh peddler chewing on a Walgreen's cigar is going to hold me up when I got every cent I ever made sunk in this expedition. The hell with you, Charley. The hell with Francine. The hell with the dynamite at the Manhattan Hotel. Let her blow herself up or go hustle a John at the Hippodrome. Because that's all she's worth and that's all you're worth. I'm going to go find a girl and I'm going to sail at three o'clock in the morning. Now get your ass off my ship.

Yeager stands up, runs his overcoat cuff across the crown of his fedora.

YEAGER

(appeasing)

Talk to you later?

DENHAM

Not a chance.

YEAGER

C'mon, Carl, I'm flexible -- you'll come --

CONTINUED

11 CONTINUED - 3

11

YEAGER (Cont'd)

(lifts up with
his hand)

a little and I'll come --

(pushes down
with his hand)

a little ---

Denham slaps his hand away.

DENHAM

Up to nothing, Charley! As of
now, nothing is my figure.

Denham drills him.

DENHAM

And you know what ten percent
of that is!

Denham rips the door open and slams it as Yeager exits. Now he sits, drumming his fingers, looks out the porthole at Yeager stalking down the gangplank, at the bustle of activity, at more equipment being on-loaded, and then suddenly he is out of the chair like a shot.

12 ON THE DOCK

12

Denham sprinting past Yeager, hailing a cab dockside.

13 ANOTHER ANGLE - TAXI

13

Zooming through the streets, pulling up at a cigar store. Denham leaps out, dives across the tile floor to the pay phone.

Dials, hooks the phone under his chin, and with the other hand helps himself to gum from the cigar counter, unfolding the tinfoil as he talks, stuffing his mouth full of gum.

DENHAM

(phone)

Eddie, I want you to set up an audition for me in one hour at the Variety Arts -- I want at least ten girls -- don't tell me Saturday -- I don't care if it's Yom Kippur and Good Friday rolled into one -- you have the girls there -- one of them's going with

CONTINUED

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13

CONTINUED

13

DENHAM (Cont'd)

me tonight -- Francine? Francine's
out -- don't tell me impossible!
Or I'll stamp you and Charley
Yeager into a block of cement and
drop you in the Narrows! That's
better. One hour --

(squints)

One hour, Charley. I want
knockers and behinds and a face
like Shirley Temple.

Slams down the phone and the cab skids into the night.

14

EXT. WASHINGTON MARKET - NIGHT

14

Ann making her way through the stalls, racks of fruit and produce, lettuce bursting from crates, oranges piled like ammunition. Her Variety is still tucked under her arm.

15

DENHAM'S TAXI

15

Pulling up for a light, Denham drumming his fingers again, hunched over. He peers out the window, his gaze lands on Ann. He trances, just watching Ann moving through the mounds of fruit and produce, her eyes on the Stand Attendant, waiting for him to be distracted.

DENHAM

Wait around the corner.

TAXI

What?

DENHAM

Around the corner.

And Denham is out of the cab and on to the sidewalk, the taxi pulling away behind him.

16

ON ANN

16

Breathing a little heavily now, weak from hunger, she sees the Stand Attendant move away to take care of a customer. She reaches for an apple, and in an instant the steely Hellenic hand is on hers.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED

16

GREEK

That's fi' cents.

ANN

(trying to shake
loose)

Just a minute, my good man.

GREEK

Fi' cents.

ANN

(still struggling)

If you'd let a lady get to her
pocketbook, we could conclude this
transaction.

The Greek releases her hand. Ann rummages interminably in her pocketbook, comes up empty.

ANN

Oh what a shame -- I must have
left my change purse on the counter
at Bergdorf's.

GREEK

Put it back.

Ann hesitates a moment, still holding the apple in her hand, she looks this way and that, trapped, now jumps as the Greek grabs her wrist again.

ANN

Take your hand off me, you big
lummox! I don't want your wormy
apple and your breath smells like
the East River!

The Greek squeezes her wrist, she is about to drop the apple, when suddenly a voice erupts from behind.

DENHAM

Five pounds of apples!

Ann's and the Greek's heads swivel.

GREEK

What?

DENHAM

You heard me.

CONTINUED

16 CONTINUED - 2

16

GREEK

What apples?

Denham points to the pile Ann had stolen from.

DENHAM

Those apples.

The Greek looks at Ann, looks at Denham, reluctantly begins counting out the apples. Denham smiles his most winning at Ann, Ann watches Denham cautiously. The Greek hands the bag of apples to Denham, he pays, then tries to hand the bag to Ann.

DENHAM

My pleasure.

ANN

Oh I couldn't do that ---

DENHAM

They're just the color of those cheeks of yours ---

ANN

Oh Mister ---

They are blocking the Greek's way who is now trying to help another customer.

GREEK

Hey, c'm'on, git outa here.

DENHAM

Hold your horses, Spyros.

But the Greek pushes Denham and Ann roughly.

DENHAM

Watch where you're going, buddy.

GREEK

Git outa here, wise guy, an' take that whoor with you.

Ann whaps the Greek across the arm with her Variety.

ANN

And watch what you say, buddy.

The Greek explodes, chopping down on Ann with the back of his hand.

CONTINUED

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17

16 CONTINUED - 3

16

GREEK

Git outa here!

But Denham slams the bag of apples on the Greek's head, the Greek coming right back at Ann with a water hose, Ann still hitting at him with Variety. Now Denham rips the scale off its chain and flails the Greek across the face, blood flies from an eye, but the Greek keeps slapping away at Ann until Denham reaches for an enormous eggplant and swats the Greek across the ear, and he goes down screaming.

Now somebody yells "Police!" from an adjacent stand, whistles blow, Denham grabs Ann and they fly around the corner into the waiting cab and skid off.

17 INT. CAB

17

The two of them, panting in the aftermath, Ann trying to get herself together.

ANN

Look at this -- my Variety's in shreds -- I'm gonna miss the casting calls....

Denham doesn't say a word, eases back in his seat.

18 EXT. FULTON FISH MARKET - NIGHT

18

Ann and Denham moving through. Crates at a stand, the fish stacked up like a frozen lake, they come to a big one.

DENHAM

(to Ann)

Sea bass....

Ann's eyes open wide and Denham pitches it on the scale.

FISH MAN

Twelve pounds at four cents a pound.

He wraps it in newspaper and hands it to Denham.

FISH MAN

That's forty-eight cents.

19 INT. SLOPPY LOUIE'S - SOUTH STREET 19

Denham and Ann walk back to the kitchen, Denham unrolls the fish.

DENHAM
Throw that on, Louie!

The cook lays it on the grill. Ann is getting woozy, the smells of the kitchen, the heat.

20 INT. SLOPPY LOUIE'S - DINING ROOM 20

Mirrors, wooden tables, a gathering place, fishermen and dealers, thick smoke, traffic moving in and out. There is a plate between Denham and Ann, the bones of a fish.

DENHAM
We were hungry.

ANN
I was hungry.

Ann falls silent for a moment, Denham offers her a cigarette. They look at their coffee, sip it in silence. Ann looks away for a moment as Denham stares at her.

DENHAM
Where'd you say you were from?

ANN
Ohio.

DENHAM
Ohio? I've played Ohio. It has a lovely quality.

Ann is silent.

DENHAM
More coffee?

ANN
No, no more coffee. And no more kind words. Just answer me a question.

DENHAM
What?

ANN
What's the angle?

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED

20

DENHAM

No angle.

ANN

You pick me up in the Washington Market, you defend my honor with an eggplant, then you stuff me full of fresh fish. I've never known a producer in my life to buy me a dinner unless he wanted one of two things. A) Get me to work for nothing, or B) Pinch my behind.

DENHAM

Neither. I want you to work for me.

ANN

For nothing, right?

DENHAM

For plenty.

ANN

Go to New York, my mother said. Sink in hell. You don't sink in hell, you just starve there.

DENHAM

Me, too. I've shot tigers in Tibet, lions in Africa, and followed natives two thousand miles across a desert to harvest a blade of grass -- and what do I get for it? Polite praise from the critics and a Saturday afternoon in Carnegie Hall.

He pauses, looks out the window as if he were fantasizing something, then whips his attention back to Ann.

DENHAM

But I'm telling you, kid, it's all going to change -- this time it's going to be a movie -- a 'movie' movie! -- the story? The most powerful force in the world -- Nature! But that's not enough. What else do you gotta have?

Ann shakes her head in ignorance.

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED - 2

20

DENHAM

(leaping in)
A girl! A girl in jeopardy!

Ann is silent.

DENHAM

And you're the girl.

ANN

What kind of... 'jeopardy'?

DENHAM

Look, it's fifty dollars a week
for three maybe four months and
all the food you can eat. How's
that for 'jeopardy'?

Ann eyes him fishily.

ANN

You going to put me in a room with
a snake? I don't go in a room
with a snake.

Denham laughs. Ann is silent.

DENHAM

What's the matter?

ANN

I dunno. My nose twitches when
I'm suspicious -- and it's going
a mile a minute right now.

She still looks at him fishily.

ANN

When does the job start?

DENHAM

Tonight.

ANN

Tonight!

DENHAM

Grab a cab to the boat and sail
at three in the morning.

ANN

You must be kidding.

CONTINUED

20 CONTINUED - 3

20

DENHAM

What are you trying to tell me?
You want to go home to Chagrin
Falls and kiss Mommy and Daddy
good-bye?

ANN

No, but I have arrangements to
make ---

DENHAM

What -- a boyfriend?

ANN

No, no boyfriend -- I have things
to pack, my apartment to take care
of, my cat ---

DENHAM

Your landlady will take care of
your cat and your apartment.
Things to pack? What's wrong
with what you've got on your
back right now?

ANN

Nuthing, I s'pose.

DENHAM

Don't tell me you want more money.

ANN

No ---

DENHAM

Look, kid, I've got ten girls
waiting up at Variety Arts, ready
to break the walls down to make
this trip. I've got another wait-
ing in the Manhattan Hotel with
her agent. She'd cost me less
than you. But you're the one I
want -- I want you -- what do you
say?

ANN

Mister, are you on the level?

DENHAM

Honey, this is Carl Denham you're
talking to -- this is not 'Trelawny
of the Wells' at the Lambs Club.

CONTINUED

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22

20 CONTINUED - 4

20

ANN

It was 'Berkeley Square' at the Blackfriars.

DENHAM

All right, all right -- I'm making you an offer. Do you want it or not?

Ann hesitates, measuring Denham, Denham measuring her.

DENHAM

Sixty dollars a week.

ANN

My nose just stopped twitching.

21 SHIP'S HORN

21

The Panama Queen bellows into the night, smoke rises from her funnel.

22 ANN - ON DECK - NIGHT

22

Her overcoat pulled up against the cold, looking up towards the bridge, fascinated by the process of the ship's departure.

23 ANN'S POINT OF VIEW

23

Driscoll stands waiting with a megaphone, Captain Englehorn beside him. There are deckhands below ready to haul on the main lines, and down on the dock stevedores prepare to release them.

Englehorn checks around, the deck, the dock, the Helmsman beside him and Driscoll, the First Mate.

DRISCOLL

(through the mega-
phone)

Take in one!

The first line is released off the bow.

DRISCOLL

Take in three!

A line is let go amidships, Ann dodges to get out of the way.

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23

24 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN

24

standing on the deck, looking up towards the bridge, watching Driscoll, impressed by his authority at the same time still bewildered by the technique and bustle of the ship's leave-taking.

DRISCOLL

Take in four!

The stern line is released and hauled aboard.

DRISCOLL

(to the Helmsman)

Left engine ahead a third.

The Helmsman moves the engine order telegraph, the bell rings, the ship starts swinging away from the pier, the stern coming first, the bow still held by a line.

DRISCOLL

(through the megaphone)

Two!

The last line is released and the ship swings clear.

25 ANN'S POINT OF VIEW

25

looking up towards the bridge, then down along the deck, trying to stay clear of the activity.

26 BRIDGE - DRISCOLL

26

Looking down, he sees Ann.

ENGLISHHORN

(to Driscoll)

Course?

DRISCOLL

(still looking
down at Ann)

Zero-nine-zero.

The Helmsman turns the wheel.

HELMSMAN

Coming right to zero-nine-zero.

Driscoll looks away from Ann now, peers ahead at moonlit New York rising in front of him, skyscrapers, the lower bay, the Statue of Liberty.

CONTINUED

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24

26 CONTINUED

26

DRISCOLL

All engines ahead.

The engine order telegraph responds and the Panama Queen moves out.

27 DECK - ON ANN

27

Looking up towards the bridge she waves at Driscoll. A sailor beside Ann, his name is Tim, is coiling a rope around a capstan, she speaks to him.

ANN

Is that the Captain?

TIM

(looking up)

No, Jack Driscoll, First Mate.

A tug blasts below, then toots. Ann smiles, waves again at Driscoll on the bridge. Now Driscoll waves back.

28 INT. PANAMA QUEEN - STORAGE ROOM

28

Denham is moving through it with Mullins, another member of the crew. There are crates and boxes everywhere, in the center a rifle rack.

Mullins opens the door off the storage room, a tub, some developing chemicals stacked in the corner, a string of lights, a processing belt. Mullins flashes a red darkroom light. They move through the storage room, Mullins pointing as he goes.

MULLINS

Akeley...tripods...magazines...
Movieola...rewinds...raw stock ---

DENHAM

Thirty thousand feet?

MULLINS

You got it.

DENHAM

Ethyl chloride?

MULLINS

Over there.

CONTINUED

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25

28

CONTINUED

28

They move to a stack of crates in the corner. Denham jimmies one open with a crowbar, pulls out what looks exactly like a hand grenade.

DENHAM

I never thought I'd see one of these again.

MULLINS

Me, neither.

Denham juggles it in his hand, now moves to another crate, Mullins jimmies it open, inside the box shaped like a fife case that Denham carried from Carnegie Hall.

MULLINS

Hey, what's in here?

DENHAM

Mullins?

MULLINS

Yes, sir.

DENHAM

You've been on two expeditions with me, right?

MULLINS

Yes, sir.

DENHAM

I found you in the boiler room, and now you can operate a camera, thread a movieola, process a piece of film. My God, we could get you a job in Hollywood, couldn't we, Mullins?

MULLINS

Yes, sir.

DENHAM

And you want to know why I like you so much?

MULLINS

Yes, sir.

DENHAM

Because you don't ask questions and you keep your mouth shut.

CONTINUED

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26

28 CONTINUED - 2

28

MULLINS

Yes, sir!

Denham chucks him under the chin.

DENHAM

Attaboy, kid!

He pitches the grenade back in the crate as Mullins hustles to nail everything down.

29 INT. PANAMA QUEEN - MESS

29

Tables, benches where the crew eats, in the corner a round table for the Captain; seated with him is Denham, Driscoll and Ann. The tables for the crew are nailed with tin surfaces, sugar bowls, wax flowers on the Captain's table and an oil-cloth tablecloth, the whole place civilian Navy.

The scene is played off Driscoll, who is quiet for much of it, but his eyes are on Ann, watching her, and watching Denham.

ENGLEHORN

West of Sumatra, Ann. At least he's told us that much.

Ann keeps looking at Driscoll whose silence seems to make her anxious.

ANN

And where is that, Mr. Driscoll?

DRISCOLL

Dutch East Indies.

ANN

You're Dutch, aren't you? You've been there before?

DRISCOLL

Yes, I have.

The quiet lays there.

ANN

(finally to everybody)

Well, dammit, I've got a part to do. I want to get ready.

CONTINUED

29 CONTINUED

29

ANN (Cont'd)
I've got no script, I've got no
character, I don't know where
I'm going, and I don't know what
I do when I get there.

Englehorn smiles.

DENHAM
Calm down, kid ---

ANN
I don't even have any clothes to
wear ---

DENHAM
Lumpie can fix you up, the
Quartermaster. He's got a sewing
machine down there ---

DRISCOLL
Lumpie's got his hands full with
crew issue. He doesn't have time
to sew dresses.

Silence.

ANN
(to Driscoll)
I understand ---

DENHAM
You don't need to, kid. Your
clothes come first, right, Skipper?

After a moment.

ENGLEHORN
You're the boss, Carl.

Driscoll gets up from the table.

DRISCOLL
Excuse me.
(nods to Ann,
speaks to
Englehorn)
I'll be up on the bridge, Skipper.

Driscoll makes his way out of the Mess, Ann watching him
disappear.

CONTINUED

29

CONTINUED - 2

29

ANN

I suddenly have an awful chill.

DENHAM

That's just Driscoll, kid -- made two trips with him now -- keeps his distance. He's had a rough life.

As the quiet lays there again, Denham dives right in.

DENHAM

Go ahead, kid -- down the passage-way there -- third door -- you'll find Lumpie.

ANN

Silk purse out of a sow's ear?
How about a wool skirt out of a pea jacket?

Ann goes; Englehorn turns to Denham.

ENGLEHORN

About our destination, Carl,
what's it going to be?

DENHAM

I'll tell you later.

ENGLEHORN

Carl, you've never done this before, what's the point?

DENHAM

I said I'll tell you later.

(evading)

Chalk it up to my sense of melodrama.

ENGLEHORN

Well I'm not interested in your sense of melodrama. I want a destination -- soon.

And he goes. Leaving Denham alone.

DISSOLVE TO

30

DRISCOLL - ON BRIDGE

30

watching the swabbies working on deck, getting at the brass, really sudsing the boards down, a man who takes pride in his ship, no martinet, but there is a way to life at sea, and he likes it respected.

CONTINUED

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29

30 CONTINUED

30

Ann appears, in the outfit Lumpie has worked up for her -- britches and boots, testing them for light, unconsciously moving about, very professionally, like an actress at dress parade, but all work stops to admire her. Across the way, Denham is getting his camera ready.

31 ON ANN

31

checking herself against the brass around a porthole. The reflection catches Driscoll, plus the reflection of Driscoll looking down at the men.

32 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN

32

looking up at Driscoll, their eyes meet. Ann quickly crosses back to Denham as the men rush back to their scrubbing when Driscoll's eye falls upon them.

33 ON DENHAM - DRISCOLL'S POINT OF VIEW

33

Denham is operating the Akeley, has it set up on a tripod.

DENHAM

All right, ready?

ANN

Ready.

DENHAM

(his eye in the
viewfinder)

Cross to the rail...that's good
...now come back...look just past
the lens...now cross back again...
very good....

Denham keeps cranking, Mullins beside him, assisting him.

DENHAM

Now scream.

Ann stops.

ANN

What?

DENHAM

Scream. Look out over the rail,
think of something that terrifies
you -- and scream.

CONTINUED

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30

33 CONTINUED

33

A weak moan comes out of Ann. Driscoll and Engelhorn watch closely.

DENHAM

Come on, kid -- like a roller coaster -- let go....

She starts to scream again, a little more comes out. Denham bends to the camera. Starts cranking. The artificiality of the situation, the camera cranking, Ann in limbo, seems to produce some kind of legitimate terror, she really lets go, the scream crescendoes, chilling, paralyzing, Denham cranking away.

34 ON THE CREW

34

stunned reactions.

35 ON THE BRIDGE

35

Englehorn looks at Driscoll, but Driscoll is still looking down at Ann.

DRISCOLL

What's he think she's really going to see?

DISSOLVE TO

36 INT. DENHAM'S STORAGE ROOM

36

and

37 Denham has an overnight growth of beard, his eyes are bleary, 37 his hair tousled, the residue of some all-night effort. He is leaping between the rewinds and the Movieola, throwing footage on, jumping back to the splicer, the film spraying around him like ribbon.

Driscoll argues as Denham stays busy.

DRISCOLL

...Yes, but frankly the Skipper's upset, Carl -- he wants a destination.

DENHAM

Tell him I'll let him know when I'm ready.

CONTINUED

36 CONTINUED
and
37

36
and
37

DRISCOLL

He said not when you're ready,
when he's ready. And he's ready
now. We'll be over the East
Indian ridge tonight ---

A knock on the door.

DENHAM

Come in! Come in!

Ann enters, Denham still bustling around excitedly.

DENHAM

Almost done!

Driscoll starts leaving, nods to Ann on the way out.

DRISCOLL

By tonight, Carl.

DENHAM

All right, all right, you'll have
it tonight!

Driscoll goes.

Ann takes a seat on an army cot beside the Movieola as Denham makes one last splice. He threads the film up, starts the machine. The pictures flicker in their faces as they stream by on the postage-stamp screen.

DENHAM

There, there, there you go.

Ann watches intently, now eases up, smiles.

ANN

Not bad.

DENHAM

Bad?! It's goddamn good!!

One of Denham's old films, a "Journey to Bali" or a "Journey to Samoa" and intercut with the standard footage of tigers caught in traps and whirling dervishes and religious services, is the footage of Ann, cut cleverly so as to make it appear she was in the film.

CONTINUED

38 CONTINUED

38

DENHAM

If I'd had you, Warners would
have doubled their guarantee.

ANN

(admiringly)

Look at that, it looks like that
man is looking at me.

DENHAM

Doesn't it?

The piece runs out, the reel spinning, the tail flapping and clicking, Ann still fixed on the tiny dark screen, taken with Denham's ingenuity. Denham has not been still for a minute, loading magazines, his hands working like a safe-cracker's inside the cloth, at the same time checking filters which sit on a shelf against the porthole, light streaming through the filters, alternating from green to red to amber.

DENHAM

You want to see it again?

Ann nods eagerly, Denham drops the changing bag, racks the reel up for her again, the film starts clicking away, Ann's face flickering out at her from the screen, Denham back with his film, still loading magazines like mad, working frantically against a non-existent deadline, checking the filters, pulling the hands out of the changing bag, pouring chemicals into the soup he used to process the footage, now back to the changing bag.

39 ON ANN

39

turning her face from the screen, looking at Denham who doesn't see her, watching his hands punch bulges in the changing bag, watching the light from the filters change the colors of his eyes. She seems fascinated by the manic energy with which he attacks what he is doing.

40 ON DENHAM

40

He feels her eyes in the back of his head, the film is still chattering in its sprockets behind Ann. Denham moves to her now, she turns back to the Movieola, but neither of them are watching it, Denham puts his hand on her shoulder, the Movieola still projecting the film, making a fearsome racket, the processing soup swirling in the tub in the sprocket, the light creeping in eerily and changing color through the filters, and Ann feeling defenseless at Denham's aggressive energy which repels her and, at the same moment, attracts her.

CONTINUED

40 CONTINUED

40

They kiss. Ann, shaken, breaks away gently.

ANN

I have to go see about ---

The rest of the sentence catches in her throat, she goes, Denham watching her disappear down the passageway.

41 INT. BRIDGE

41

Driscoll and Englehorn checking the charts, a Helmsman at the tiller. Everything normal.

Denham appears at the wheelhouse, slides open the door, pitches a map on the chart stand. Driscoll turns to this weathered piece of paper, the markings all handmade.

DENHAM

(to the Helmsman)

Will you call Mullins? He'll know what I mean.

The Helmsman picks up the ship's tube and calls for Mullins as Driscoll gets up from the chart stand, puts down his dividers.

DRISCOLL

What is this? There are no quadrants marked....

DENHAM

You'll find it. Southwest of here. Not far.

ENGLEHORN

I've worked these waters all my life -- there's no island southwest of here.

DENHAM

It's there -- a canoe full of natives was blown out to sea. A Norwegian barque picked them up, all the natives were dead except one -- he died, too -- but before he died, he described this island and its location to the skipper of the barque. The skipper drew the map and I bought it from him.

Driscoll and Englehorn wait.

CONTINUED

41 CONTINUED

41

DENHAM

It's there. And it's like no other island on earth -- and by the time I come back from it, I'm going to have pictures of it -- and the most incredible creature that ever walked this earth.

DRISCOLL

'Creature?'

DENHAM

It's name is Kong.

DRISCOLL

Kong?

DENHAM

You know it?

DRISCOLL

A Malay superstition. A god, or a spirit, or something.

DENHAM

(leaping at him)
Wrong! No god! No spirit!
Alive! Neither man, nor animal, but a force who has terrorized these islands for centuries. I'm going to find it. And I'm going to photograph it.

Denham places another map on the chart stand.

DENHAM

Here's a second map. Of the island itself. A wall built centuries ago -- like ones in Angkor and Yucatan -- to keep a force like this out -- but there's no way through the wall and almost no way into the island -- reef all around and the rest, cliff -- beyond the cliffs, a mountain -- shaped like a skull --
(indicating)
-- however it looks as if there might be one opening here -- through the reef -- if we could catch the tide ---

CONTINUED

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35

41 CONTINUED - 2

41

DRISCOLL

There is no tide.

DENHAM

What are you talking about?

DRISCOLL

Because there is no island. Kong is a legend. And so is your island.

Denham looks at Driscoll, now at Englehorn.

DENHAM

Well, I believe in legends. An old moviemaker I knew said if you have a choice between fact and legend, go ahead and print the legend. Because there's always some truth to them. And I've got it. Mullins!

Mullins appears outside the wheelhouse door carrying a paleontological case, Denahm slides it open, grabs the case from him. Mullins vanishes outside as Denham lays the case on the chart stand, opens it.

42 ON THE CASE

42

A bone, about three feet long, thick, lying in the customary Museum cotton batting, shards of dirt and brush, having dried, spotting the white.

43 ON DENHAM, ENGLEHORN AND DRISCOLL

43

DENHAM

I also bought this from the Norwegian. This is a bone from the foot of a triceratops. Do you know what a triceratops is?

DRISCOLL

Prehistoric ---

DENHAM

Exactly. A hundred and ten million years ago. Gigantic -- thirty feet tall, weighed ten tons.

ENGLEHORN

But that's a fossil -- people find them all the time. That and the rest of the skeleton might get you a good fee from a museum.

CONTINUED

43 CONTINUED

43

DENHAM

Look closely -- what do you see?

Driscoll and Englehorn peer down.

DENHAM

It's clean isn't it? Fresh -- not veined like a fossil.

ENGLEHORN

Come on, Carl -- what is it?

DENHAM

This bone belonged to a creature who just died. This creature was alive five years ago ---

Silence. A grin spreads over Englehorn's face.

ENGLEHORN

Carl, an old hand like you -- falling for a stunt like that -- you've taken too many trips....

DENHAM

The Norwegian wouldn't let it go. I paid him half the proceeds of my last expedition -- he wouldn't let go of this or the map ---

ENGLEHORN

(examining the claw)

You just took his word for it?

DENHAM

Checked it with a research assistant at Natural History ---

ENGLEHORN

And?

DENHAM

He hemmed and hawed like all 'qualified' people do when they're confronted with the truth. Mumbled about archaeological digs and X-Rays -- the point is he couldn't believe it because he wouldn't believe it -- But he didn't deny it.

DRISCOLL

You checked it further?

CONTINUED

43 CONTINUED - 2

43

DENHAM

Why? And let my secret out to the world. Somebody will steal it from me. It was a piece of luck meeting that Norwegian that day. And I feel lucky tonight. I'm going to find my island -- and on that island there's more animals like this one. And I'm going to find Kong. And when I carry this story to the world, we'll all be legends.

(at Driscoll)

The whole crew of the Panama Queen. Our names will be in every newspaper and one every radio in the world. They'll pay us to appear. We'll be rich -- all of us. And you'll have me to thank for it!

He slams the case shut and bolts with it from the wheelhouse.

ENGLEHORN

What do you think?

Driscoll checks the weathered map again, and what calculations he has been able to make.

DRISCOLL

Looks like a three degree correction.

Englehorn nods.

ENGLEHORN

(to the Helmsman)

What's your course, Baker?

BAKER

Zero-nine-zero, sir.

ENGLEHORN

Correct to zero-nine-three.

BAKER

Aye, aye, skipper, correcting to zero-nine-three.

The Helmsman turns the tiller slightly.

44 EXT. DECK - NIGHT

44

The fog is thicker than cotton batting, a dense, immense mass socked all around the ship, you cannot see past your nose, the ship's engine idling nervously, the crew passing each other like ghosts, the clank of chains and footsteps, the thickness mottling everything except the sounds which reverberate off the ocean, distilled by the fog.

Ann is on deck, her gaze fixed on Denham who is hanging off the gunwhales right behind the Leadsman who is spinning the lead into the water and drawing it in.

LEADSMAN.

Thirty, bottom!

Denham, nervous as a cat, trying to hurry the process, Ann watching Denham.

45 ON THE BRIDGE

45

Englehorn is peering out, Driscoll beside him, torches flaring beside them both. They listen as the Leadsman keeps tolling the depths.

LEADSMAN (o.s.)

Thirty, bottom!

ENGLEHORN

It'll sit at thirty forever.

DRISCOLL

For these parts, thirty's shallower than I would have guessed.

46 ON DECK

46

The line swings past Ann's ear and hits the water like a pebble, the still ocean under the fog shattering like glass.

LEADSMAN

Thirty, bottom!

Ann pulls her coat around her, she moves closer to Denham who is right behind the Leadsman, urging the line out with each swing of the Leadsman's body.

LEADSMAN (o.s.)

Twenty-eight, bottom!

Driscoll looks at Englehorn.

47 ON DECK

47

The Leadsman swinging faster now, Denham right with him, Ann closer to Denham now. The Leadsman, caught in the excitement, does not stop, just keeps twirling and splashing.

LEADSMAN

Twenty, bottom!

Denham throws a fist up at the bridge.

DENHAM

What does she draw?

Driscoll looks down.

DRISCOLL

She draws four. Four!

LEADSMAN (o.s.)

Ten, bottom!

48 CLOSEUP - DRISCOLL

48

shakes his head in disbelief.

49 ON DECK

49

The Leadsman swings a last time, Denham hanging right over him. The leadline rips into the water.

LEADSMAN

(screaming up)

Bottom, six!

50 ON THE BRIDGE

50

DRISCOLL

(yelling forward
to the Lookout)

Let go!

But before the Lookout can reach for the winch that holds the anchor, Denham has released it himself. It slides into the water and hits with a crash.

51 ON THE BRIDGE

51

Driscoll turns to Englehorn.

CONTINUED

51 CONTINUED

51

DRISCOLL

His island...he was right all the time.

Englehorn lifts his binoculars, tries to see through the fog which is as thick as ever, the ship motionless in the night, just the slapping of the anchor chain, but mixing with it another sound now, steady, repetitive.

DRISCOLL

What's that?

ENGLEHORN

Breakers. Breakers hitting the shore.

DENHAM

They're not breakers. They're drums.

And the sound is identifiable as soft, rhythmic Indonesian-like drums -- and Denham appearing behind Englehorn and Driscoll, triumphant, ready to pounce on them for the weeks of disbelief.

ENGLEHORN

(turning around)

They're breakers.

DENHAM

No breakers were ever as steady as that.

DRISCOLL

He's right.

DENHAM

What are we waiting for?! Lower away -- get those boats off the davits ---

ENGLEHORN

Not in this soup, Carl.

DENHAM

Why not?

ENGLEHORN

I don't want to row all over the Indian Ocean ---

DENHAM

The drums will guide us in ---

CONTINUED

51 CONTINUED - 2

51

ENGLEHORN

We need to mark our position, Carl.
Got to know exactly where we are.
We might never find this island
again.

But Denham, watching the activity on the island, ignoring him.

DENHAM

I don't want to lose this. Let's
go in tonight.

ENGLEHORN

Need our position first, Carl.

Driscoll checks through the telescope again, shakes his head, caps it up.

DRISCOLL

(to Englehorn)

I don't trust a night-sight. Have
to do it in the morning. I'll come
off the horizon.

DENHAM

When?! When?!

ENGLEHORN

In the morning, Carl. Please.
When it burns off.

Englehorn pulls his jacket up against the night. But nobody is moving, nobody is leaving the bridge, now Ann appears, silently takes a position beside Denham.

ANN

Did you hear that?

DENHAM

I heard it.

ANN

What are we going to do?

ENGLEHORN

We're going to wait.

ANN

But the island's there, isn't it?

DENHAM

Of course it's there. It was
always there.

52 EXT. DECK - NIGHT

52

The fog as thick as ever, the cotton batting dense and dazzling, but no break in it, closed all around, suffocating, intense.

53 ON THE BRIDGE

53

Denham and Ann and Driscoll and Englehorn, all squinting into the soup, waiting, nothing happening, the ship slapping against the anchor chain. The drums beating quietly, but insistently.

54 DECK - ANOTHER ANGLE

54

Poised by the boat davits are members of the crew, their hands on the winches, rifles slung, waiting to move, but there is nowhere to move in the choking mist, no let-up in the condensation. They are buried in a cloud.

55 ANOTHER DAVIT

55

Mullins and Tim waiting, with camera equipment and cases of chloride grenades, everything in readiness, but the ship is still, as if it were adrift, anchored in the middle of nowhere, beyond reach of anything.

56 ON THE BRIDGE

56

Denham growing impatient. Driscoll raising his binoculars and lowering them, nothing to be seen, no clearance ahead. Ann watches them both, leans over the rail, peers out, the drums are still going, muted by the thickness, but present, and steady.

57 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN

57

As she turns, a sudden shaft of moonlight seems to catch her eye, a glint. Denham sees it, turns around, Driscoll and Englehorn lean in more, the drums still sound distantly, but their direction is clearer, a feeling that the soup is breaking up at last.

58 DAVITS - CREW

58

Mullins and Tim fiddle with their equipment, the sense of imminent clearance. Mullins checking the raw stock, Tim checking the chains on the longboats, turning around to see the oars mounted neatly against a passageway.

59 DENHAM AND ANN'S POINT OF VIEW

59

There is still a haze, so thick you could cut it with a knife, but the moon is cutting through now like a cold iron, little patches opening up, the dead calm sea looming up in places, but beyond that -- nothing.

60 ANOTHER ANGLE - DRISCOLL AND ENGLEHORN

60

Englehorn peering out, Driscoll looking at Denham, then at Ann, everyone waiting, waiting to see what's ahead.

61 DENHAM

61

He takes his hat off, wipes the sweatband, and now looking up at Ann, he sees her face reflect light, and then Driscoll's, and then Englehorn's.

62 ANOTHER ANGLE - CREW

62

Mullins and Tim and the rest, a glow coming up over their faces. They wait motionless, letting the moonlight hit them. The damp air clearing suddenly. A star-filled sky suddenly crashes down on them from above.

63 DENHAM AND ANN'S POINT OF VIEW - SKULL ISLAND

63

Everything vaporizes -- and suddenly there it is, Skull Island. The great cliffs, the beach below, the reef, beyond the cliffs a mountain shaped like a skull, a strange and lustrous paradise rising out of the moonlit mist. Brigadoon, and Shangri-La and Bali H'ai rolled into one, but more distant, mysterious, less beckoning -- yet indescribably beautiful. The cold light of the moon hits Denham full in the face.

64 ON DENHAM

64

sucks in his breath, replaces his hat on his head, stares into the distance, drinking in the sight.

65 ON ANN AND DRISCOLL AND ENGLEHORN

65

Ann blinks, the view overpowering her, and with her, Englehorn, also taking it in, feeling a kind of sanctity to the moment.

Driscoll looks at Ann. She looks back at him. They both turn towards the island now, and finally -- Driscoll smiles.

66 ANOTHER ANGLE - CREW

66

Like a congregation at a church, taking in the apparition in front of them and then suddenly, bursting from them, a balloon of noise, a tremendous cheer.

Their joy is cut by a roar from the bridge -- Denham yelling.

DENHAM

Lower the boats! Serve out the rifles! Tim! Mullins! The equipment! Move!

Now Denham is all over the place, scrambling around the ship, the whole crew in a welter of activity, the winches squeaking as the boats zoom down towards the water, then hit with a splash.

The passageways are clogged, everyone moving this way and that, the boats loading, the crew hurtling down the ladders, Denham running for the rail, shouting orders, Driscoll and Englehorn behind him.

Ann is hanging back against the companionway, Driscoll sees her.

DENHAM

You got the lenses, Mullins!

MULLINS (o.s.)

(from the boat)

Got 'em sir!

DENHAM

The tripod! Tripod!

MULLINS (o.s.)

Got it! Got it!

Denham looks around, one last minute check, sees Ann.

DENHAM

Okay, kid, let's go!

Ann can't move, all the assured activity of the crew neutralizing her own shaky responses.

DRISCOLL

You're bringing her along?

DENHAM

My cast.

Reaches for Ann.

CONTINUED

66 CONTINUED

66

DRISCOLL
You better find out what's there ---

DENHAM
I've learned the hard way -- wherever you are -- you have your camera, you have your equipment and you have your cast. Ready! Let's go kid!

DRISCOLL
Leave her, Denham ---

DENHAM
She's coming. Now!

And Denham grabs Ann and pitches her over the side onto a ladder, she climbs down, with her movie equipment, grenades, oars, all following. Denham, who has climbed past her to the boat below, catches her with one hand and with the other pushes off from the "Panama Queen."

And they go.

67 EXT. LONGBOAT

67

There are three pairs of oars, six members of the crew are rowing. Englehorn and Denham are in the bow. Ann with Driscoll in the stern. The crewmen who are not manning oars have slung rifles, gear is stacked with a tarp pulled tight over it. Another boat moves behind them, manned by six more crewmen.

The moon is dazzling now, and as the lead boat draws closer, the sound of the drums comes stronger, along with the sound of gamelans, echoing against the drums. The whang of them strong.

68 EXT. SKULL ISLAND BEACH

68

Rows of outrigger-like canoes, their sails furled, bumping in the water, moored to the sand by ropes.

69 EXT. LONGBOAT

69

approaching the beach. Denham and Englehorn looking over the bow, seeing the outriggers as their boat comes alongside.

CONTINUED

69 CONTINUED

69

The drums and gamelans are really stirring now, the longboats beach, the crews work smoothly unloading the gear. Tim carries the camera. Mullins pulls the tripods, a chain is set up and the crates of ethyl chloride and ether tanks are passed to the beach.

Denham and Englehorn jump off, Driscoll jumps off. Ann jumps, lands in about a foot of water, moves up on the beach. Two crewmen stand by the boat as the rest move on to the island. The sound echoes now, and with the moonlight, there is a feeling of power and ritual coming through from beyond the undergrowth. And now a chant begins, rhythmic, but one word, a monosyllable inexorably mingling and separating from the sounds of the drums and gongs. It is unmistakable. And human.

DENHAM

'Kong.' 'Kong.'

ENGLEHORN

Where are they? There's no one on the beach, the outriggers look like they've been pegged there for days ---

DRISCOLL

Could be a feast. They're always giving feasts. I'm not sure ---

ENGLEHORN

Why are they shouting 'Kong'?

DRISCOLL

I don't know -- never heard it in Nias. And that's only six hundred miles from here.

DENHAM

You speak Nias?

DRISCOLL

Badly.

70 LANDING PARTY

70

They move through the brush that separates the beach from the sounds which are coming from within the island, the brush finally starting to clear, into what appear to be some ancient ruins.

71 RUINS

71

Massive, mossy, Angkor Wat-like, a promontory reaching skywards. Driscoll signals Tim to pass him a rope ladder. Driscoll slings it over his shoulder, and he climbs up the promontory.

He drops the ladder down. Now, Denham holds it tight for Ann. She swings up it. Denham and Englehorn follow. The crew fans out.

The sound is deafening, a powerful, throbbing riff-like chant, the gongs and drums going against it.

72 ON THE RUIN

72

Englehorn and Denham and Ann and Driscoll look down. Over the ruin, past the growth, to the base of a wall in the distance....

73 EXT. VILLAGE - BELOW THE WALL

73

Five hundred natives are massed around an altar. Some carry spears and shields, others wear hornbills. Grouped around them are terraces made of stone, megaliths, giant mushroom shapes with gargoyles growing out of them and around the edges pillars, crowned with figures of deer and rhinoceros birds.

There are sarcophagi everywhere, coffins on top of these megalithic stones, on the coffins figures of birds and lizards.

On the altar in the center is the Chief and his Queen, and a Slave bound to a bench, stretched out. A Priest moves around.

The chant of 'Kong! Kong!' bounces off the walls of the clearing and against the giant, mountain-high stone embankment with arches cut in the center of it. There are Legong dancers moving ceremonially about the altar, young girls trained in the art. Serrated around the edges of the altar are ranks of native men bending from the waist, their foreheads touching the ground. They hiss as they come up, then they bend again. Tranced.

The Priest moves towards the Slave; she is dressed in a ceremonial gown.

74 EXT. RUIN

74

Denham and Driscoll and Ann are riveted on the sight. Denham loads his camera, starts shooting.

75

ON DRISCOLL AND ANN

75

Driscoll seems to be in pain, his head nodding in knowledge of what is unfolding in front of him.

ANN

What are they doing?

DRISCOLL

I don't know!

But Ann senses his understanding of the scene.

ANN

Please, tell me -- what is it...
you do know ---

Driscoll hesitates.

DRISCOLL

...They're going to sacrifice
that girl. But first they're
going to try the jewelry on her
that was made for the queen.
Whoever wears new jewels will die.
Once the slave is killed, the
jewels are safe for the queen.

The "Kong" chant keeps coming, the gamelans play, the Legong dancers move around the border, the rows of native men keep hissing, falling tranced to the ground. There is a terrible squealing and a mass of pigs snort into the clearing, herds-men beating and driving them.

ANN

What are they for?

DRISCOLL

I tell you I don't know!

But he apprehends what is happening, and Ann looks back to him.

ANN

What now? What are they going
to do!?

Driscoll relates to himself what is happening, not to Ann.

DRISCOLL

They'll die too. A hundred head
of pigs, that means a hundred
hams is the offering. The Priest
will put the jewels on the slave --
a filet, an earring, and a necklace.

CONTINUED

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75

CONTINUED

75

ANN

Will they really kill her?

Driscoll doesn't hear her, he is fastened on the scene in front of him, watching a sword being brought to the Priest. The Chief and his Queen are raised up on sedan chairs. The chant is unbearable, the noise a thunder.

The Priest raises the sword.

76

ON DRISCOLL

76

He looks away, his face contorted, in agony.

Suddenly the chant stops.

77

ON THE RUIN

77

Denham looks up from his camera, and from below he sees heads swivel towards them, everybody looking at Driscoll and Denham and Ann. The bodies rise from the "ketjak" trance, an army of natives facing them from below.

PRIEST (o.s.)

Bala! Bala!

78

ON DRISCOLL

78

Turning around now, seeing the slave is still alive on the altar, seeing the eyes massed on the group on the ruin.

DRISCOLL

(through his
teeth)

Get down.

DENHAM

What?

DRISCOLL

Get down, for Christ's sake!

Ann goes first, they move down the ladder, at the base of the tree they walk towards the clearing. The crew of sailors tries to surround Driscoll and Denham and Ann to protect them.

But the Chief has climbed down from the sedan chair, the Queen has been carried off, and a path clears for the Chief as he moves forward with the Priest.

CONTINUED

78

CONTINUED

78

CHIEF

Bado! Bado!

No one answers. Denham looks at Driscoll.

DENHAM

Is it Nias?

DRISCOLL

I don't know what it is -- let's get out of here.

And he starts moving backwards with Ann -- but as soon as he moves, a rank of warriors move with him, jump behind the party and they are surrounded.

79

ON DRISCOLL .

79

looking behind, looking forward, now holding his ground, aware he has no choice.

DENHAM

Well speak to him, man! Speak to him!

Silence. Both sides watching each other. Dingo dogs prowling around, scratching in the dust. Suddenly one of the warriors threatens Ann with a spear.

DRISCOLL

(shouting up)

Tabe! Bala! Tabe! Bala!

No one answers, the Chief and the Priest watching, looking them over.

DENHAM

(prodding Driscoll)

Again! Again!

DRISCOLL

Tabe! Bala! Tabe!

CHIEF

Bala reri! Tasko! Tasko!

The response is vehement, Driscoll blinks at the harshness, Denham searching Driscoll's face.

CONTINUED

79

CONTINUED

79

DENHAM

Well?! Well?!

DRISCOLL

I don't know ---

DENHAM

What did you say!!

DRISCOLL

I said we were his friends. He
said he doesn't want any friends.

DENHAM

That's it?! What's the rest??

DRISCOLL

'Get out! Get out!'

DENHAM

Tell him we're his friends. We'd
like to stay.

Driscoll hesitates, looks around at the path to the rear,
still blocked by warriors.

DENHAM

Tell him!

DRISCOLL

Bala! Bala!

PRIEST

Punya bas! Punya!

There is a great stamping of spears and shaking of hornbills.
Now the women among the gathering, led by the Queen, begin
to file out.

DENHAM

What is it?! What's happening?!

DRISCOLL

I don't know.

DENHAM

Well, find out, man!

Driscoll turns back towards the Chief.

DRISCOLL

Bala! Bala!

PRIEST

Punya! Punya!

79

CONTINUED - 2

79

Again the spears stamp, the hornbills shake.

DRISCOLL

He's talking about his ceremony.

PRIEST

Saba Kong!

DRISCOLL

I think he thinks we've ruined
his ceremony.

The mass of Islanders rise up now and chant "Kong! Kong!"
The place thunders with the sound.

PRIEST

(again)

Saba Kong!

DRISCOLL

That's it. The Chief has sought
favor with Kong and we have ruined
it and we will have to make it good.

CHIEF

Malem ma pakeno.

DENHAM

What is it now?

DRISCOLL

I don't know -- I can't understand.

CHIEF

Kong was bisa! Kow bisa para
Kong!

The Gamelans sound, a drum, a Legong dancer moves around Ann.
And now the Priest explodes in a torrent of dialect, the
dancer all the time moving around Ann.

PRIEST

Bala! Bala! Punya! Punya!
Kong! Kong! Bala! Bala!

Driscoll takes it all in, the Priest intoning loudly.

DENHAM

(to Driscoll)

What is it?!

Driscoll ignores Denham.

CONTINUED

79 CONTINUED - 3

79

DRISCOLL

(to Ann)

Just start walking backward with
me, talking to me, like I'm your
friend, like you belong to me ---

DENHAM

Tell him we'll be back tomorrow.

DRISCOLL

You tell him.

And Driscoll starts walking backwards with Ann, the warriors hold their ground, but as Ann keeps talking to Driscoll, they slowly give way.

ANN

(to Driscoll,
as they back)

I belong to you, you're my friend.
Port. Starboard. Stern. Bow.
Lillian Gish. Joan Bennett. John
Gilbert, John Barrymore, Douglas
Fairbanks....

Now Denham follows.

DENHAM

(to Driscoll)
Tell him -- tomorrow!

They keep going, the crew moving with them.

DRISCOLL

Dulu hi tego! Bala! Dulu!

There is a cry from the mob, "Kong!" but the little crew keeps backpedaling.

DENHAM

What did you say?

DRSICOLL

I told him you'd be back tomorrow.

They step into the boats, Tim and Mullins shove them off, as just then there is a cry from the altar.

80 OMITTED

80

81 ON DRISCOLL'S FACE

81

Exhaustion.

DISSOLVE TO

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82 LONG BOAT

82

Ann in the stern, sitting next to Driscoll, drawing some warmth from him, Denham looking back towards the island, the Crew pulling hard on their oars.

DISSOLVE TO

83 ON DECK

83.

The night is absolutely clear, the visibility almost without limit, but the drums have stopped beating. The quiet is ominous. Water lapping against the hull, anchor chain squeaking, the ship silent.

94 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN

84

coming out on deck from her cabin, looking towards shore.

95 REVERSE

85

The island and the mountain and the beach all perfectly still, everything gone dark now, except for two torches burning in the distance. She keeps watching the island.

86 ANOTHER ANGLE - DRISCOLL

86

further up the deck, looking out himself. He doesn't see Ann, but she moves towards him.

They meet at the rail, look at each other, look over at the island. The silence is heavy, the two of them conscious of each other's presence but not speaking.

DRISCOLL

The drums have stopped.

ANN

I heard them. What does it mean?

Driscoll deosn't answer.

Ann is watching him all the time, but Driscoll's attention is on the island. She watches his face, catching the light off the waves.

ANN

Where did you get your scar?

Driscoll doesn't answer. Ann is about to repeat the question when Driscoll reaches in his jacket, pulls out a flask, offers it to Ann.

CONTINUED

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86 CONTINUED

86

DRISCOLL

Drink?

Ann hesitates.

ANN

No thanks. One drop of that and
I'll be two sheets to the wind.
But I am shaking.

DRISCOLL

Believe me it helps. For the
English, they say tea's the
sovereign cure. For the Dutch,
it's brandy.

ANN

Driscoll -- that's not a Dutch name.

DRISCOLL

My father was English, my mother
was Dutch.

(smiles)

I stick to brandy.

She takes the flask now, a careful nip. They sit, looking
at the two lone torches burning across the water on the island.

87 OUTRIGGERS - ON THE WATER

87

coming through the night, unseen from the deck, moving silently,
Warriors paddling, others crouching in the hull.

88 INT. BRIDGE

88

Denham is pacing back and forth, Englehorn holding his ground.

DENHAM

We've had this before -- remember
that time in the Sudan ---

ENGLEHORN

Lives were not at stake! Human
sacrifice -- you saw it ---

DENHAM

But we're on the edge of something
big, skipper -- don't you feel it --

CONTINUED

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88

CONTINUED

88

DENHAM (Cont'd)

You can't quit on me now, my God,
it was fascinating tonight -- the
footage is incredible -- Mullins
is running it through now ---

ENGLEHORN

I don't care about the footage --
I saw the look on Jack's face --
he knows something -- I've never
seen him like that before.

(after a moment)

I'm weighing anchor, Carl -- I'm
getting the hell out of here ---

DENHAM

I've got a contract in my pocket.
Signed paper.

ENGLEHORN

I don't give a goddamn about your
contract!

Denham stops, looks at Englehorn.

DENHAM

Okay, okay, I'll admit it's rough.
And I know what you mean about Jack.
I saw the look too, and he knows
these islands ---

ENGLEHORN

You're goddamn right he does and
he's terrified ---

Denham stops pacing, sits, offers Englehorn a cigar.

DENHAM

You know this is our last trip,
skipper?

ENGLEHORN

What are you talking about?

DENHAM

What you were talking about at lunch
the other day -- your retirement --
thirty years in the maritime service
-- I'll bet the stingy pensions these
owners give don't pay for a mortgage
on that house in Jersey ---

CONTINUED

88 CONTINUED - 2

88

ENGLEHORN

Carl, save that crap for starlets
and producers. We're leaving to-
night.

89 ON DECK - ANN AND DRISCOLL

89

There are now two tumblers beside them, Ann's half-filled,
Driscoll drains his. He keeps looking at the island. Ann
watches him.

The silence still there, Ann watching his face.

ANN

If you don't want to tell me about
it, you don't have to.

Suddenly he looks right at her, . She meets the look.

DRISCOLL

I grew up in the East Indies -- my
younger brother, myself...Father
farmed copra -- we would go with him
sometimes to the outlying islands --
while he did his business, we would
explore -- one day we wandered too
far -- ended up in a village like
that one -- they were very primitive
too -- still making sacrifices -- the
Priest saw my brother. He had this
pale, angelic face -- I guess the
Priest thought he as a good spirit
-- a perfect offering to appease the
gods -- so they took him to the altar
-- I tried to stop them and the Priest
whipped me -- flayed this skin open --
I was terrified -- I ran -- I ran as
fast as I could, the blood pouring
out in front of me -- then I heard
my brother scream ---

He is silent. Ann is watching him, moved by his story.

A voice rings out from the bridge.

ENGLEHORN (o.s.)

Jack, get up here will you!

CONTINUED

89

CONTINUED

89

DRISCOLL

What is it, Skipper!

ENGLEHORN

Take a star-sight! Take a star-
sight, it's clear.

DRISCOLL

(to the bridge)

Right away!

He looks back at Ann. Their eyes lock.

DRISCOLL

Aren't you sorry you asked?

She doesn't flinch.

ANN

(right back)

No.

And he goes. She stands up to watch him move up the companion-
way to the bridge.

90

ON THE BRIDGE

90

DENHAM

Gimme a day fer Christ sake, just a
day! Just one more day on that
island! It means everything to me.
C'mon, Skipper!

Englehorn turns around.

ENGLEHORN

All right. One day.

91

ON DECK - ANN

91

She smiles, some perverse thought crossing her mind, she hums
a few bars from an aimless popular song of the day, half sing-
ing, half humming.

ANN

'Don't blame me
For falling in love with you
I'm under your spell, but how can
I help it....'A hand, with shell bracelets around the wrist, appears on
the railing behind her.

92 INT. BRIDGE

92

Driscoll is trying to take a sighting, in the background, Denham is giving instructions to Englehorn.

DENHAM

We'll take three boats tomorrow.
You and Driscoll take the two on
the port and go with the crew, I'll
take the starboard with Mullins and
the equipment and the girl ---

Driscoll comes off the telescope.

DRISCOLL

The girl?

DENHAM

That's right.

DRISCOLL

Don't do that.

DENHAM

Why not?

DRISCOLL

They want her for Kong!

Denham and Englehorn are stunned for the moment.

DRISCOLL

That was what that babble was about
at the end -- when the Dancer was
moving around Ann -- they want Ann
as a sacrifice for Kong -- the
'golden crown' -- the 'golden hair'
-- they think there's enough good
spirits in her to appease Kong
forever.

DENHAM

Great!

ENGLEHORN

What?!

DENHAM

We'll protect her of course. Don't
let her move without a squad of
rifles around her -- her safety is
my first concern -- but, gentlemen,
this is going to be an extraordinary
movie!

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED

92

Driscoll is silent, letting Denham wind down.

DRISCOLL

We'll go in with you, Carl. But she stays here.

Suddenly there is a scream from below.

LUMPIE

On deck! On deck!

Driscoll dives for the companionway, almost knocks Lumpie over, who is running up it.

Lumpie shows Driscoll a bracelet.

LUMPIE

They've got her....

Driscoll looks at Englehorn.

ENGLEHORN

Let's go.

DRISCOLL

(grabbing the
bull horn)

All hands on deck! Prepare landing party!

And now the whole ship erupts. Crewmen come screaming from every passageway, clattering down gangs, falling out of bunks, bulkheads jamming, everybody shouting at once.

A siren sounds, everything is moving, and in every direction. A terrible tumult. But the crew moves as a unit under Driscoll who is everywhere, barking orders, his urgency contagious, the crew quickly following his instructions.

DRISCOLL

Hit it now! Get down there!

The men scramble down the ladders.

DENHAM

Mullins! Chloride!

Mullins grabs two crates as Denham lays hold of Tim.

DENHAM

Get the camera! Move!

CONTINUED

92 CONTINUED - 2

92

And as Tim hustles the camera, Denham grabs for the tripod.

ENGLEHORN
Rifles! Sling rifles!

Down below the rifles are served out, as Driscoll is above yelling to the crew to hurry the winches lowering the boats.

DRISCOLL
Go! Move!

As soon as the boat hits the water, Driscoll is over the side, Denham right behind him, oars manned, the crew pumping them.

DRISCOLL
(at the crew)
Work! Pull!

DENHAM
(leaning over
to Mullins)
Gimme the hand camera.

Mullins reaches in his pack, passes what looks like an ancient version of the Imo to Denham, Denham places it in his pack.

DENHAM
How many magazines did you bring?

But Denham sees Driscoll has heard him and now Denham eases back, bracing himself against the crates of grenades, without waiting for an answer from Mullins.

93 EXT. VILLAGE

93

A thousand torches, torches burning everywhere, this clearing against the massive wall lit up like a skyscraper, the drums rapping a thunder, the hiss of the trance coming through it, a sense of rising and inexorable pressure, the sounds and the movement feeding on each other.

A scaffolding has been built up to the wall, a latticework of bamboo and palm, now the hissing of the trance stops and suddenly the dehypnotized men have fallen back like the petals of a flower, the circle opens up, and they are scampering up the rattan trellises like fireflies, a torch in one hand, grabbing rungs with another.

94 ALTAR - ANN

94

lying on the megalith as the slave had early in the day, and wearing a similar ceremonial dress. Her arms and legs are bound with rattan, a gold filet has been placed in her hair which has been wrapped like a native's. There are gold bracelets on her wrists and ankles, a gold chain around her waist.

95 TOP OF THE WALL

95

A great drum stands at the top of the wall, the Chief in front of it, his spear planted beside him. He looks down the scaffolding towards Ann.

96 ANN - ON TERRACE

96

She waits, looking out. She doesn't struggle, but watches, not panicked, stunned.

96-A ON THE WATER

96-

The longboats beating towards shore, Driscoll taking an oar himself, Denham peering towards shore, trying to size up the situation, getting his shots ready.

97 SCAFFOLDING

97

Torches flying upwards as they are lobbed towards the top of the wall. Arcs of light pirouetting up, the natives clambering towards the top, the whole top of the wall a ridge of flickering light.

98 DRUM - CHIEF

98

He waves his spear in front of the drum, a great semaphoric motion which is answered from below.

99 ARCHWAY

99

The wooden latch is massive, operated by a giant vine which is pulled by ten men as a counterweight - the guards fight and jabber with each other as they struggle to pull the vine down which, in turn, lifts, the latch.

More guards move in, the latch slowly lifts.

100 ANOTHER ANGLE

100

The archway swings open slowly, a massive creaking as the rattan hinges give, this is a wall seventy-five feet high, the guards, ten of them, have to fight to push it open.

101 ANN

101

turning, her head swivelling behind her, seeing only the blackness beyond.

102 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN

102

A sedan chair is brought for Ann. She is lifted into it, carried from the terrace, through the archway out into the darkness beyond the wall.

103 ALTAR BEYOND THE ARCHWAY

103

Ann being carried up to a place rarely used. Leaves and fallen branches all about, the place thick with the refuse of vegetation, branches are cleared away and Ann is fastened to another megalith, an osa, a carved animal, a gargoyle on the end of a stone pillar. She is tied up again.

104 ANN'S POINT OF VIEW

104

The natives scurry back through the arches to safety. Above them, the wall, the torches burning along it, the Chief almost astride the gong, supernumeraries beside him, holding lances wrapped with fronds to beat the drum.

105 ANN

105

bound to the megalith. Torches burn at each corner of the altar. A branch catches fire, then flares out. The jungle is alight.

106 ARCHWAY

106

The latch being shoved and tugged and pulled through the door handles, dust rising again as the massive hinges swing closed.

Ann is alone.

106-A IN THE BOATS

106-

The Longboats moving, the men rowing frantically, Driscoll and Englehorn hissing at them through their teeth.

107 FROM THE TOP OF THE WALL

107

The Guards clambering up the scaffolding, waving torches themselves, fighting for places on top of the wall.

108 THE WALL - FROM THE BASE

108

Every foot of space is crammed at the summit now, a wall of light matched by a wall of sound, with drums beating, the gamelans whanging now, the torches pumping into the air.

109 ANN - AT THE ALTAR

109

She does not pull, she watches, she waits. She kicks at a frond in front of her, it catches fire, she pulls her foot back. Now she pulls once at the fronds that bind her, but nothing gives. There is a jangle from her jewelry, the filet and the bracelets, the gold chain clicks. She falls silent. And the torches crackle.

110 TOP OF WALL - CHIEF

110

He raises his spear. Instantly the place falls silent, nothing, not a movement, not a cry, only the sound of the torches.

111 IN THE BOATS

111

The Landing party freezes at the silence. They look around, look ahead, see the torchlights burning, but no sound.

112 ON DRISCOLL - IN THE LONGBOATS

112

Frozen still, the same look of horror on his face that was there when he heard the silence as he last left the island.

Suddenly he breaks, grabs an oar, starts rowing, half-crazed, towards the beach.

113 TOP OF THE WALL

113

The Chief raises his arms to the blackness beyond Ann.

CHIEF

Kara Ta ni, Kong. O Taro Vey Rama
Kong.

A title supers.

CHIEF

We call thee, Kong. O Mighty One,
Great Kong.

The Chief raises his spear once more.

CHIEF

Wa saba ani mako, O Taro Vey,
Rama Kong.

A title supers.

CHIEF

We call thee, Kong. O Mighty One,
Great Kong.

Now the great drum is beaten by the supernumeraries beside the Chief. It is like a cannon, sounding and resounding in the blackness beyond. And now the army on top of the wall raise their torches, intoning a chant, sounding like the gong itself.

TRIBE

Kong! Kong! Kong!

They fall silent suddenly. They hear something. They look ahead. The Chief looks beyond the wall. Some subliminal sound has been made heard to them, not audible to anyone else. They wait for it to come again.

And now it can be heard.

Branches break, the crackling grows stronger, it crashes now, and now the crashing becomes rhythmic, a thud, almost sonic, the sort that would make windows crack and chimneys topple, a terrible, terrible rhythmic pounding, and the jungle responding with the crash of trees and branches and growth, and now coming with it, another sound, almost unearthly, and yet weirdly human, a grunt which is like a bomb hitting the ground and not exploding, a thud, a crash.

114 BRUSH - LANDING PARTY

114

freezing again, reacting to the sound. But Denham breaks.

CONTINUED

114 CONTINUED

114

DENHAM

Let's go! We'll miss it! Move!
Up the path!

Denham looks back towards his equipment.

DENHAM

Timmy, the camera! Mullins,
Tripod!

And the rest of the crew breaks with him, moving double-time,
Englehorn shouting instructions going with him.

115 ON DRISCOLL

115

still standing in place, neutralized. Now he takes off.

116 ANN - ON ALTAR

116

waiting, watching. She looks towards the archway.

117 ARCHWAY AND WALL

117

Panning up the archway to the top of the wall, the villagers stand catatonic, their torches frozen in their hands. The Chief, in a reflex of protection, holds his spear like a crossbow.

118 KONG'S FOOT

118

A foot the size of a car. It plows through the brush like a bulldozer kicking growth and saplings aside, crushing one, splintering another.

119 KONG'S HAND

119

A tree blocks its path, it is ripped out, shredded, tossed aside, the hand is like a giant construction machine, back-hoes in the palm, the fingers steamshovels. A banyan tree cracks as if lightning hit it.

120 KONG'S CHEST

120

It covers the screen, a heaving mass like a football field in December mud, growth clinging to it, branches and weeds

CONTINUED

120 CONTINUED

120

and clods of earth. But something beautiful about it, as it breathes in and out like a Bessemer bellows, heaving with life, but massive, monolithic, a skyscraper that falls and fills like a human. Powerful and black and terrifying and unseeable.

Incomprehensible.

121 KONG'S FACE

121

a simian colossus. Wells for eyesockets, nostrils set in the skull like howitzers, ears that flare from the head like trees, and a mouth like a volcano, mandibles that come down like granite towers and a jaw like a Himalayan cliff. But it is the eyes that give him away, eyes that see, eyes that feel, eyes that betray every emotion that goes on in the massive id of a brain, that wants, that eats, that feels, that weeps. With all the massive other-worldliness of this creature, it is his eyes that are the great anomaly -- like that of a sensitive, retarded, over-sized boy, every giant who has ever lived in fiction from Lenny in "Of Mice and Men" to Gulliver. Ignorant of its own strength, powerful as a city -- as feeling as a child.

122 KONG - FULL VIEW

122

Another tree is ripped out and now Kong comes closer, the altar is within his view. He sees Ann.

123 CLOSEUP - ANN

123

She freezes, she doesn't move a muscle. Not a blink. She cannot believe what she sees, and she cannot see what she believes.

124 KONG - FULL VIEW

124

The sound is powerful that emanates from his chest, it is human and searing and needful. And terrifying. He makes the gorilla-motion -- he touches his breast with each hand. But it is not proudful or arrogant, -- as if feeling his way, as if finding out where he is.

Now he moves closer. His hand, which is the size of Ann, brushes away the branches next to her. He touches the pillar Ann is tied to and it crashes, and then silence again.

CONTINUED

124 CONTINUED

124

Ann is isolated on the altar. Kong watches her, he waits. She starts to move, his hand goes up like a wall. She waits, he watches her curiously. Not a mouse and a cat, but a flower beside a railroad train.

125 KONG AND ANN

125

He lifts her up. His hand closes around her; for Ann it is the distillation of every nightmare in every dark soul of humanity. Darkness and dense smell and all the animals of every civilization that have ever walked this earth close around her. And she is alone.

126 KONG AND ANN - ANOTHER ANGLE

126

Kong raises Ann up towards the wall, he is acknowledging the offering.

127 THE WALL

127

The natives wave their torches. They are in terror, they barely move, they cannot run. The Chief waves his spear in a great circular motion. An exchange of ritual as Kong starts back into the jungle.

128 LANDING PARTY

128

Racing across the clearing now to the wall, Denham in the lead, mad with excitement, Tim and Mullins right behind him with the equipment, Driscoll sprinting past them, Englehorn and the rest of the crew bringing up the rear.

129 DENHAM

129

Running to the archway, looks through the gaps in the giant teak long and stone and moss that have formed it, sees Kong moving off with Ann. He is stunned for the moment, then suddenly overcome with exhilaration.

DENHAM

Look! Look, Man, look!

Driscoll comes up to the gate.

DRISCOLL

Jesus God.

CONTINUED

129 CONTINUED

129

Denham, taking charge, signals the men to move.

And now they do, these Lilliputians, wordlessly, it seems, as if a signal is passed between them. A block-and-tackle is thrown over the great latch, they heave to it and pull it out. The giant archway swings open.

130 ON NATIVES

130

on top of the wall, their spears aimed at the Crew as they are about to charge through the archway.

Denham looks up, fires his rifle, the others fire volleys into the air, and the natives freeze. Everything is silent. Part of the crew start pouring through the gate.

131 ON THE CHIEF

131

Terror on his face, the noise of the men sweeping under him, a terrible scurry, he screams in disbelief as they vanish into the jungle, into Kong's territory.

CHIEF
Bala! Bala! KONG!

132 ON ENGLEHORN

132

Assembling the rest of the men at the archway, sending three rifles here, three rifles there, suddenly Englehorn stops, looks around.

133 ENGLEHORN'S POINT OF VIEW

133

An instant hush has fallen on the place, the whole native population has disappeared, there is not a breath, not a whisper, only the crackle of torches burning on the scaffoldings.

134 ON THE MEN

134

looking around, frightened by the silence, aware they are alone. Now Englehorn signals two pairs of Crewmen to the arches, and they move to lash the doors open, the rest taking up defensive positions around the archway, their rifles at the ready.

The only sound that of the ropes being tied, and gunbolts cocking.

135 IN THE JUNGLE

135

Denham and Driscoll leading the vanguard of the landing party after Ann and Kong; Denham's head swivelling periodically, signalling Mullins and Tim to stay close with the equipment.

136 EXT. JUNGLE - DAWN

136

The light is just coming through the dense undergrowth. It is more than dense, thick with vines and leaves, a choking kind of growth, no air to breathe, no room to move, Driscoll in the lead with Denham, picking trails and openings.

And the trail is unmistakable. A tree dislodged, the bank of a stream caved in, gaps in the growth which could only be made by some tank or earthmover, Denham following quickly, picking up the track.

Now sounds start to come up, but not the sounds of dawn we are accustomed to, but screeches and whacks and hisses, not at once, but singly, apart, occasionally the sound of a bird, but cacophonous, like a duck call or a macaw's squawk.

137 ANOTHER ANGLE - CREW

137

Denham leading them through the growth, a platoon, like some antecedents of Corregidor or Vietnam, Denham the squad leader, spreading them out, giving them hand signals, his eye always on the point man, stopping every few steps, waving this way or that, trying to read the sounds and markings of the jungle.

As they move farther in, the growth gets larger, the trees wider, the brush denser, the vegetation taking on the size and habitat of Kong.

Denham throws up a hand to halt the crew, he steps into the trail, listens, and in the distance, far, remote, something cracks, something splinters, now they keep moving, Denham urging them on, Driscoll watching warily, tracking at his own speed, a unit of one.

138 ON DENHAM

138

Lost for a moment, the Crew spreading around, suddenly Mullins takes off for the brush, he stumbles, falls over an embankment and into Kong's track. He yells for them "Hey! Hey! Over here!" and they run over and look down.

139 OMITTED

139

140 MULLINS - POINT OF VIEW - CREW

140

They herd around him. He has sunk into the whole print, and the print itself is as large as his body. Mullins looks at the sides of the wall made by this giant depression, but Denham reaches down for him.

DENHAM

Let's go! Let's move!

(pulls Mullins
out; signals the
rest of the Crew;
to Tim)

Get up front! Spread out!

(placing the men,
this way and that)

Take the point there! Wider!

Wider! Double-time!

Denham is like a hound dog on a scent, feeling himself closer, the men taking his lead, sensing some knowledge of this wilderness issuing from him.

All except Driscoll, who moves at his own pace, but in reach of the others.

141 JUNGLE - ANOTHER PART

141

Now it really opens up, as if another scale had taken over, the trees like a cathedral of redwoods, fungi growing like carbuncles on giant mangroves, moss hanging like sheets of green rain, there is more space, yet at the same time it is denser, thicker and larger, an oppressiveness to the atmosphere and a sense of wet foreboding.

142 DRISCOLL, DENHAM AND CREW

142

They stop, there is the sound of something whipping through the air, a zinging, suddenly Driscoll and Denham duck, diving past them are what appears to be a pair of birds, but they are not birds at all, giant dragonflies, not monstrous but oversized, predaceous insects who must have fed on something monstrous.

The dragonflies climb now, towards the branches of a tree, they hover like helicopters beside a ramp of moss, now duck into it, the dead lichen flying like dust behind them.

143 ANOTHER ANGLE - DRISCOLL AND DENHAM

143

moving forward, tentative, guarded, but a creeping terror taking hold of the Crew as they perceive the changes in the environment.

143 CONTINUED

143

Way in the distance, there is the sound of crashing through the growth, the muffled roar of Kong and the men move on, seduced by their purpose, but mesmerized by the terrifying surroundings.

144 EDGE OF THE MARSH

144

Time has passed, darkness seems to be closing in, and with the night, the decibels of the jungle multiply, a forest awakened not like the Amazon or the Congo by sunlight, but by the night, the squawks and cackles increasing and now suddenly these sounds are overcome by another, one growing, a buzz which turns into a racket which turns into a roar.

145 GLADE

145

With terrifying abruptness the surroundings change, tickets open, light comes through, a curtain of growth suddenly opens up.

A Garden of Eden, a lushness beyond dreams, willows hanging, soft ferns branching overhead, breadfruit and monkey pod haloed by the setting sun, a place untouched it seems, the hollow of some sacred forest, as rich and elegant as the etching of a Dore print. But the sound continues.

146 BALUCHYTHYRIUM

146

In the center of the glade, in monstrous contrast to its surroundings is the shape of some giant beast, the size of ten fallen oaks, it is dead but its carcass cannot be seen. Covering it is a mass, a starved colony of Dermestid beetles, the greatest carrion eater that has ever existed, tiny, tiny insects which form into masses and strip bare a body of fifty cubic yards in a day. But it is the noise they produce which horrifies, every little infinitesimal jaw working on the meat, the eyes, the innards, and multiplying until the glade is filled with clacking thunder.

147 DRISCOLL, DENHAM AND CREW

147

They hold their arms over their ears to deaden the deafening sound of the parasites chewing on this beast in front of them. Suddenly the thunder quiets, it subsides, there is only silence, but the Dermestids have not moved, they sit poised like an immobilized black cloud over the bones that remain. An errant clack, a last thousand moving over some stray piece of meat and then these are silent, too. They have eaten their fill, the body is clean.

Denham attaches an ethyl chloride grenade to his rifle,

148 DERMESTIDS

148

The colony departs; an untidy parade of an infinity of satiated insects, moving off towards the marsh, where the men wait. The wavering black column comes dangerously near, Denham cocks his rifle, but Driscoll slaps it to the ground.

But now that they have cleared, what they have left, the bones of what they have eaten, reveals itself. Even dead, it is far more terrifying than the live insects who just departed it.

149 BALUCHYTHYRIUM

149

The skeleton of a giant animal, 25 feet long, 17 feet at the chest, a quadruped, the outlines of four giant legs clear. It is enormous and threatening in death, and in its position, unlike anything that might ever be constructed at a museum, because it seems poised, as if it might rise again.

150 DENHAM AND DRISCOLL

150

Coming close, the men taking minutes to walk around it. Denham and Mullins and Tim with their weapons on guard, as if this ghost which existed might suddenly flesh up and consume them.

DENHAM

What is it?

DRISCOLL

What's left of a baluchythyrium.

DENHAM

A what?

DRISCOLL

Baluchythyrium. The largest mammal to ever walk this earth.
A giant rhinoceros.

DENHAM

And when did this thing 'walk the earth?'

Driscoll looks at it, he keeps a safe distance. There is a far off roar from the marsh.

DRISCOLL

Thirty-five million years ago.

DENHAM

What do you mean?

CONTINUED

150 CONTINUED

150

DRISCOLL

They were extinct thirty-five
million years ago.

Denham looks down, the bones of this giant beast arcing
against each other, like a cathedral.

DENHAM

So it's true.

Driscoll looks at Denham, now down at the beast.

Denham looks around to the men, they are cut loose, floating
free, drugged on what they see before them. Their weapons
seem useless; their proportions strange, the dimension be-
tween them and the world they are in, an anomaly.

The Crew look at each other, now at Denham.

MULLINS

Let's go back.

TIM

Get out of here, for God's sake.

DENHAM

'Get back'?! What are you talking
about?! We've found it! We've
found what we're looking for --
Kong! My God, it's here -- you
can't let it go!

DRISCOLL

What is 'it'? Something you can
sell tickets to?

DENHAM

You're goddamn right!

Driscoll looks at him.

DRISCOLL

Don't forget your cast.

And Driscoll moves on by himself.

In the distance, a thunderous crash, the plodding and yet
rhythmic sound of Kong moving through the distant brush, and
then a splash of water, another splash, the sound of some-
thing like a ship going down from drydock. The men look at
each other, now at Denham plunging off after Driscoll, they
wait a moment,

And then they, too, follow Driscoll.

151 MARSH - DARKNESS

151

There is still daylight, but now it is closing in, thick mists forming, steam rising from the bog around them. Reeds and foxtails and cattails growing everywhere, rushes, the place biblical and wet and seductive and they tumble into another print of Kong's and another, these depressions in the muck like mortar craters.

152 ANOTHER ANGLE - MARSH

152

The reeds clearing now, the wetness underfoot getting thicker and suddenly beyond them opens a great dark lake, like something in the hill country of Ireland, Yeats-like, too placid, the end of it cannot be seen.

153 LAKE EDGE

153

The track disappears along the edge of the water. Driscoll looks one way and then the other, there is only growth on the banks in either direction, no gaps, no trail broken, no sign of Kong. There are fallen trees along the lake beach, the straight trunks of Cypresses. Wordlessly, the men fall to, Denham leading them, lengths of rope drawn from the equipment they carry, and they start building a crude raft, the Cypresses lashed with rope and vines, the crevices packed with mud.

154 RAFT -- ON LAKE

154

They move not very well, proceeding warily, poling with hand-made oars.

DENHAM

More to starboard! Keep coming!
That's it!

But Denham's instructions just seem to send them sideways, Driscoll sees the lack of movement.

DRISCOLL

Ship! Ship the oars!

The Crew pulls its oars, there seems to be a little current now, carrying them.

DRISCOLL

Dig in now! Dig!

And now catching the current, watching Driscoll for the rhythm of the stroke, they seem to move better, traversing well, the stillness breaking by them and in the distance the occasional crack of a branch as their prey comes into earshot.

155 LAKE - ANOTHER ANGLE

155

Lying there in black placidity, the mists rising over it like the moisture from a cauldron, from it comes the sound of a pair of ships moving in tandem, and then the sound erases itself and rising up thirty feet in the air is the head of a parasaurolophus, grotesque, giant, duck-billed, and above its head a crest ten feet high, a crest like that of a cardinal or a blue jay, terrifying when mated with its web-like front feet which give it purchase in the water. Beyond them the massive rear legs, like the stumps of a green cedar, this creature part fish-part bird-part reptile, its duck bill sinking under the water to gobble up ten yards of plant life in one gulp.

And now it flattens out and swims, its tail sailing perpendicular to its body, propelling itself like an outboard, a giant barge moving through the water with the grace of a sea serpent.

156 RAFT - CREW

156

Denham's voice floating over the water, oblivious of the army-in-one that has already spotted them, his matey shouts of "Keep digging!" "Pull, pull!" "Over to port now!" Ludicrous in the face of the danger he cannot see.

157 PARASAUROLOPHUS

157

Moving slowly through the lake, its giant legs seeking a grip on the lake bottom, it seeing the foreign bodies that lie ahead of it.

A plant eater, a coward in its surroundings, fleeing ponderously from the great meat-eaters that fed off it, still it has a sense of its size, like a hippo or a rhinoceros, herbivores themselves but known to charge something smaller when threatened. It plants its great legs firmly, and sinks its great crested head under water until it disappears.

158 RAFT - ANOTHER ANGLE

158

Denham directing the crew to paddle close to shore, still unaware of the silent behemoth that lies underneath them and now explodes out of the water, the neck shooting up like a graceful nightmarish reed.

The Crew sees it rising over them now, their paddles are suddenly frozen, they look at this apparition blocking the sky, Denham raises his old Springfield and fires, another crewman fires, Denham now reaches for the ethyl chloride but it is too late, the Parasaurolophus has submerged again.

159 RAFT - ANOTHER ANGLE

159

Paddling once more, wordlessly, thinking the danger is gone, the horror a bond between them, making for the safety of the shore beyond.

160 RAFT ON THE WATER

160

Ripples, ripples not formed by their own paddles, giant ripples coming from somewhere underneath and now the Parasaurolophus has raised up and its great crested head, a monstrous appendage to the fish-like body, is trying to lift up the raft and it does.

161 RAFT

161

going over, toppling, Denham and Driscoll sliding off, lenses and tripods, rifles, everything sliding into the blackness of the lake.

162 PARASAUROLOPHUS

162

going down again, going down because that is how it feeds, up and down, poring over the marsh bottoms, and now coming up again for the human plants that are swimming for their lives, trying to make it to the shore but the monstrous thing makes waves like the ocean, it is hard to go against the breakers.

163 ON DENHAM

163

His camera over his head, struggling to get some foothold in the marsh, whipping out the camera, throwing the case away, cranking and shooting, reaching for the case, stuffing rolls of film into his jacket.

164 MULLINS, TIM AND CREWMAN

164

Left behind, struggling, the Parasaurolophus comes up with marsh grass, and still feeding on the same swoop he raises up the Crewman, and the flesh tasting strange, he flings him back to the water, all 30 tons applied to the thrust and the sailor hits the surface dead, as if shot from a cannon.

Others are going under now, they cannot make it to the shore, and still others swimming furiously.

165 PARASAUROLOPHUS

165

after Mullins now, he has Mullins and he heaves him up and spits him out, and Mullins goes down, his body plummeting to the bottom, his backpack of ethyl chloride going down with him. And with it, his camera.

166 MARSHES

166

Driscoll leading the escape, cutting his way through the reeds, the ponderous saurropod following them, taking one step for every ten of theirs. They cannot move out of his path. He is not chasing them, just feeding, cutting his swath and clearing out these alien plants who are in his way.

167 TIM

167

struggling to catch up. Driscoll turns for him but the beast is too fast, he is at Tim's heels. Denham is reloading, still shooting.

168 ANOTHER ANGLE

168

Tim falling, now clambering up a dead tree trunk, agile, terrified, holding onto a branch, climbing higher, twenty, thirty, forty feet, several stories high.

169 PARASAUROLOPHUS

169

crashing through the marsh, now twenty yards away from Tim, and not taking another step, just leaning forward to the branch as if Tim were a leaf, taking him in his soft functionless jaws, gumming the pathetic man like a fruit, now dropping him. Tim dead, less from the fall and the masticating, than the horror.

170 ON DENHAM

170

running for his life now, the Parasaurolophus after him, swooping up great gobs of grass.

171 DRISCOLL, CREW

171

running ahead, pulverized with fear, now tripping onto higher ground, getting more sure-footed, getting a hold of themselves.

172 ON DRISCOLL

172

Seeing Denham behind; starts to turn back, starts to run for him.

173 DRISCOLL'S POINT OF VIEW

173

Sees the Parasaurolophus closing on Denham, his foot comes up in the air.

174 ON DENHAM -- IN THE MARSH BANK

174

looking up, the sky turned to darkness, as if he were in a mammoth cave, as the Parasaurolophus moves right over him. His camera still cranking.

175 HIND FOOT

175

coming down, just missing Denham, making a deep crater with its footprint, Denham falling free and deep, into the bottom of the crater, into the bank of the marsh.

176 PARASAUROLOPHUS

176

plodding off, its attention diverted by moss hanging overhead, he swoops up for it, the moss swirling about his neck as he disappears into the mists.

177 ON DRISCOLL

177

looking at the gap where Denham was, now looks back at the men, they seem to hesitate for the moment, the leader of the expedition apparently gone. Driscoll searches their faces.

DRISCOLL

Come on, let's go!

BOW WATCH

What's the point, Jack?

BAKER

We've got no rifles, no ammo --

DRISCOLL

What about the ethyl chloride?

BOW WATCH

Went down with Mullins....

CONTINUED

177 CONTINUED

177

Driscoll looks around, now he just turns and goes. The men hesitate, then Lumpie starts out.

LUMPIE

Right behind you, Jack.

The others look ahead, then look back at the marsh where the Parasaurolophus was -- and then they, too, follow Driscoll.

They come to another opening, like the glade, picturesque and seductive as still another Eden but grown thicker, coarser, the habitat more wild and threatening, and then they see a chasm separating the two sides of the clearing an almost endless gorge, a fault in the earth which drops away to nothingness. Across the gorge is a log, and they cross it and then suddenly rising above them on the other side, roaring, pounding his chest in fury and pride, is Kong. He carries Ann close, almost protecting.

178 CREW

178

slamming backwards now toward the log, running for their lives, their shouts enraging Kong, but he is restrained in his movement, he has to carry Ann carefully. They reach the log, Driscoll, in the lead, a terrible panic upon them all as Kong advances upon them inexorably, a fury upon him, a sense of challenge from these gnats, and fear of retribution for the prize he holds carefully in the minefield that is in his hand.

179 KONG AND ANN

179

His movements are constricted, what is usually a graceful loping gait for him is hampered by his prize and now coming on a giant dead evergreen mangrove tree, its center hollowed out, he sets her carefully beside it, protected by it, and now he moves toward his imagined enemy.

180 DENHAM - IN THE CRATER

180

lying there, unable to move, trying to raise himself.

181 CREW - IN THE CLEARING

181

just making it to the other log, the giant log across the gorge, now almost abreast of it, it had been a great cypress

CONTINUED

181 CONTINUED

181

and it straddles this gorge like a colossus, room almost
for two to go across at a time, but Kong is close behind
the Crew. Lumpie gets caught on the stump of a branch, and
the rest of the Crew are clogged up behind him.

182 KONG

182

On the edge of the gorge, he opens his arms to some unseen
God, now he pounds his breast in victory and fury, a terrible
sound, the mud flying off his chest, the leaves blowing.

He reaches down for the tree trunk.

183 CREW ON LOG

183

Kong lifts, he cannot budge the log for an instant, then like
a great derrick his paws lift and surge and the trunk gives
way and he holds the men above the gorge like worms on a
twig and slowly, inevitably, he lifts the trunk vertically
and they start to slide, one, then another, then another,
then another.

184 KONG

184

still rocking the log, bodies falling off it like termites,
one after the other.

185 BOTTOM OF THE GORGE

185

Rock, mud, slime, a watery and dark grave, a bottomless pit
which consigns the men to oblivion. Nothingness, rock
slides, dust and boulder, all the detritus of a tropical
paradise turned into a great bog, a sewage of darkness.

186 DRISCOLL

186

On the log with the last two men, and as Kong turns to throw
them off, rocking the log, Driscoll is swung to the opposite
bank, into the side of a ledge, and he falls to the floor of
some rock outcroppings and scrambles into a shallow cave.

187 KONG

187

roaring now as one last obstacle blocks his path, one lone
sailor remains on the log, the poor Bow Watch who fell asleep
when Ann was abducted. He is a doughty soul, and Kong shakes

CONTINUED

187 CONTINUED

187

and he falls, but still the sailor grabs hold of the bottom of the log, dangling like some exclamation point over the gorge, and now improbably clambering up again. Kong shakes and the sailor flies, flies into space and down into the gorge, his screams mingling with those disappearing below.

Silence falls over this clearing, a terrible and empty silence shattered now by Kong pitching the great tree trunk over his head and then throwing it down after the dead, a marker for them, a wooden monument to their muddy grave. The log bounces off the sides of the gorge and lands with a thud at the bottom, crushing one last sailor reaching for the sky from the mud.

Kong beats his breast, he turns to Ann. But first he hears something.

188 CAVE - DRISCOLL

188

peering out, trying to catch sight of Ann.

189 KONG

189

What he had heard was Driscoll, and he sees him now and moves to the edge of the gorge, reaches down towards the cave, his great hand almost covering the mouth of the cave. Too big to reach in to Driscoll, Kong leans over the edge but Driscoll backs into the cave, just eluding Kong.

190 ANOTHER ANGLE

190

Kong changing his position, leaning in another direction, his fingers jointed like three footballs strung together, his fingers trying to walk the ledge to get to Driscoll. Kong gets really close now and Driscoll reaches in his belt for a rigging knife. Driscoll waits, he backs to the floor of the cave now, strikes at Kong's finger. Driscoll has cut, cut deep, a slash and a gutting which could kill two men. But Kong rips at the knife and it flies out.

191 KONG

191

jumping back, and when he jumps, the earth shakes next to him, the dust flies, there is a kind of reverberation and then a silence falls as he sits now beside Ann and he examines his finger strangely, this sting, this itch on his finger; it amuses him almost, puzzles him, he has been hurt before, but nothing so curious.

192 ANN - TREE

192

She has found herself a hollow, she huddles there, her dress is torn, her shoes long gone, looking like some highway hitch-hiker now, all speckled with mud and scratches. But there is some fascination in what she sees, in this creature who stands stories high sitting across from her, looking at the scratch on his finger, like a boy who has cut himself on glass at the playground.

193 ON DENHAM - MARSHBANK

193

Coming to now, trying to climb up the sides, falling down to the bottom, grappling with the mud. Now carefully, painstakingly, he starts to dig footholds in the side of the marshbank, wet sockets which is hands and feet can stick to.

He starts up, falls back again, gets a little farther each time.

194 DRISCOLL IN CAVE

194

beaten, a wreck now with fear, the knife just a limp of gore lying a few paces from him. He leans back against the wall of the cave, trying to pull himself together, his strength sapped, his body wasted.

A vine hangs outside the cave. Driscoll watches it. Now he forces himself to his hands and knees, crawls towards it. He peers out of the cave, looks past the vine to Kong who remains entranced by the trace of blood that comes from his finger. Past Kong, still burrowed down in the hollow of the log, is Ann. She looks out, past Kong now, over the edge of the gorge, to the cave. She catches a glimpse of Driscoll.

Their eyes lock.

195 ANOTHER ANGLE - DRISCOLL

195

Moving towards the vine, he takes hold of it, but at that instant Kong, sensitive to any movement in the surroundings, jumps up, reaches down to snatch at Driscoll and Driscoll must dart back in. Kong is enraged, he roars at this gnat beneath him, and now he begins moving the earth into the gorge, each hand a giant bulldozer, lifting the earth, pushing it, lumping it, and now filling up the gorge, trying to make a platform for himself to reach the cave.

196 BOTTOM OF THE GORGE

196

One lone crew member, still alive, tries to struggle upwards.

CONTINUED

196 CONTINUED

196

Kong lifts a ton of earth, drops it, the crew member is buried like a worm under a boot.

196-A ANOTHER ANGLE

196-A

digging furiously, making headway, the earth flying like an avalanche, Ann snuggling deeper into her log as Driscoll is backed against the mouth of the cave.

197 KONG'S HAND

197

swinging down like the door of a plane hangar, swinging in front of the entrance to the cave, moving more earth now, his excavations upsetting the structure of the soil, and now the earth begins to pile up, more than pile up, roll and rumble, taking hold, the gorge filling up with Kong's massive earthworks, the rumble a thunder, Kong stepping gingerly out on to the mound he has made, reaching in for Driscoll, about to pluck him out, when suddenly something cracks, then crackles like a sheet of lightning, and now the sound is rolling and repeating on itself, mounting like an electrical storm, and now the crackling grows deeper, sharper, more like a bark, but the bark of something massive, thunderous.

Kong stops. His hand freezes inches from Driscoll. Driscoll falls back, against the side of the cave, sinks to the floor. Out.

198 ANN

198

starts climbing down the enormous tree, a giant, giant mangrove which branches and spreads up towards the night sky like a cathedral.

199 CLOSEUP - ANN

199

a sound coming to her, a sound rising over all the other sounds of this prehistoric wasteland, a sound which overrides the great grunts and roars of Kong, who waits poised over Driscoll's cave, the sound of an express train coming through a jungle, a train with three cars, flying at the speed of a jet it seems, terrifying, hissing like a steel factory, cutting a swath like a quake.

200 TRICERATOPS

200

bearing down on Ann like a giant racing car, at a speed of over 60 mph, a jaw a meter long, tusks like whipsaws, the the most vicious mamal that ever walked this earth, the speed

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85

200 CONTINUED

200

and agility of a greyhound, spring in its legs like a kangaroo, and the desire to eat, destroy, to kill like a Tyrannosaurus Rex. Bits of flesh from the baluchytrium hang from its jaws. and now as he rushes into the clearing, he springs and with one leap, he is almost next to Ann.

He pauses for an instant, his head bobbing like an elephant's, and now he starts to move in a circle around Ann, preparing to kill, he picks up speed, darting around the track he has made for himself, moving like a tank at incredible speed, turning the circle, getting ready to strike.

201 ANN - IN THE TREE

201

She tries to move, the train is coming and it is as if she were tied to the track. The speed is building in the Triceratops, it is a thing of grace, live, organic, fluid, but its tusks snap and flail like a box of lit firecrackers. Ann jumps down into another hollow of the tree.

202 KONG - BY THE RAVINE

202

He turns, looks back once at Driscoll in his cave, and now as he sees the thunder approaching, he moves towards Ann, a roar comes up from the center of him, it is emotion unfettered, a sense of love and fear all at once.

203 ANN

203

The Triceratops has hit, the tree shakes. His jawbone drops wide open, a mandible three feet long, a head like a cliff. And now the head swivels.

It sees Kong. Drops Ann.

204 TRICERATOPS AND KONG

204

The Triceratops charges and Kong is hit, goes off balance, shuddering to the earth.

205 CLOSE SHOT - TRICERATOPS

205

Its monstrous legs pin Kong to the ground, the mouth falls open, about to tear at Kong's flesh, about to jerk off shards from this enormous head, when Kong reaches up and like some benighted Sumo, grabs the Triceratops around the neck. But the Triceratops is slashing at him and he must give way.

206 TRICERATOPS, KONG

206

farther away, the clearing visible, the light shining through like a Dore again, Kong reaching out with his great hand to

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86

206 CONTINUED

206

punch, to jar, to get a grip, Ann frozen like a child who has been told not to move, or she will die. Not a breath, not a whisper, not a blink.

207 KONG

207

making his rush now, reaching for the powerful front legs, snatching at them, prying them apart, throwing this mammoth off balance. Kong gets inside of the legs and reaches for the tusks, to grip the upper and lower jaws, to spread and break them.

208 ANOTHER ANGLE

208

The Triceratops flipping over now, Kong falling on top of him, twenty tons falling on thirty tons, but the Triceratops has all the whippy flexibility of a Doberman in his massive body, and he throws Kong off, his jaw swinging free like a wrecking ball, coming dangerously close to Ann.

209 MARSH BANK - DENHAM

209

stirs, regains consciousness.

210 KONG AND TRICERATOPS

210

Kong dives under the Triceratops, grabs his front feet, swings him over his shoulder, the Triceratops springs up and savages Kong's neck.

211 KONG'S POINT OF VIEW - ANN

211

The Triceratops is racing for Ann again. Kong is enraged all over, provoked beyond his strength, offended and challenged and fighting for his life and the strange-scented gift that has been given him from beyond the wall. His arm reaches in a great swing and he hits, as if a bulldozer were hitting a barn door, and the Triceratops goes down. Kong dives for the neck, pulls the jaws apart.

212 ANN

212

trying to sink back further into the tree when there is the sound of a crack, like lightning, then a thud.

213 TRICERATOPS

213

his jaw flopping open like the wings of a bat, blood pouring through the jawbone like some black gusher, spouting and spraying the trees like an hallucination, Kong diving in once more, slamming the jaws open farther, like a flytrap, and the Triceratops is dead.

214 KONG

214

Coming to his feet, almost stately, with great dignity he turns to the forest and pounds his chest, the quacks and hisses and caws of this unearthly forest answer back, and now Kong turns to Ann, faces her, touches his chest with gentle pride.

215 MARSHBANK - DENHAM

215

climbing out.

216 ANN

216

seeing, almost accepting this gesture, there is some sense of contact made at this moment, as if he had reached her but then she shrinks back. Kong moves to her, his mammoth finger almost touches her and she shrinks back farther, into the tree, looking away, looking everywhere but towards him.

217 KONG

217

He places his foot on the Triceratops, he faces Ann proudly, seeking some acceptance. There is the gentlest of grunts from him, now his cheek moves involuntarily towards his shoulder, he rubs it, the blood of where the Triceratops reached him comes off, he rubs again, he licks, he tends himself, he grooms, he moans.

218 OMITTED

218

219 KONG

219

now steps over the Triceratops, reaches for Ann, plucks her out of the tree.

220 DENHAM

220

arrives, sees Kong carrying Ann off.

221 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG AND ANN

221

moving into the great Garden behind them, the sun setting now, Kong's neck black with dried blood, Ann in his hand, the scent of overripe fruit about both of them.

222 TRICERATOPS

222

A terrible screeching goes up and the scavengers of the Jurassic Age move in, the Archaeopteryxes, the first birds, tiny vultures, three claws on each wing, their teeth sharp as spikes. They move for the open wounds around the jaw first.

223 CAVE - DRISCOLL

223

swinging out, belaying himself out over the rock with the shred of vine that remains. Inchng himself up, now gaining handholds and footholds, the vine dropping away, Driscoll studying the side of the rock wall like a chessboard, picking his spots, handhold, toehold, then gaining the top. He moves towards the edge of the gorge, and now a brushing, a sound of a body moving, and Driscoll wheels, looks through the scrim of ferns and sees a shape moving on the other side of the drop.

224 DENHAM

224

covered with mud from the marshbank, cut up, bleeding.

225 ANOTHER ANGLE - DRISCOLL AND DENHAM

225

facing each other across the gorge. They do not speak. They just look at each other. For an instant, Driscoll wants to turn to move away, as if he wished Denham had not come back to life.

But Denham throws a rock across, as if to hail this stranger. It bounces at Driscoll's feet. Driscoll looks beyond Denham, only the dense woods, thickets, razor shafts of light.

DENHAM

Where are the rest?

DRISCOLL

Gone.

DENHAM

Gone?!

DRISCOLL

Dead. They're all dead.

They watch each other.

DENHAM

You all right?

Driscoll nods. He picks up the stone that Denham threw, pitches it; it drops into the gorge. Denham looks down at the bodies and the brush and the logs at the bottom.

Now from the distance, Kong bellows, a bird squawks, something scurries through the brush.

DENHAM

We've got to do something. Got to follow him. We've got to get him.

CONTINUED

225

CONTINUED

225

Driscoll blinks, waits, moves for an instant towards the roar in the distance, now turns back.

DRISCOLL

More men....

Over his shoulder.

DRISCOLL

Go back for the rest!

DENHAM

And the chloride! I'll get the chloride!

Driscoll looks back.

DRISCOLL

All right... Hurry.

DENHAM

Track him. For God's sake, stay close to him, Driscoll. Don't lose him.

But Driscoll is gone.

Another roar and Denham is also gone, back towards the village.

226

GLADE - DRISCOLL

226

The clearing again, the sun shining through, the trees and brush an insanely ornate Victorian frame to the centerpiece of the dead Triceratops, the carcass half-eaten by the Archaeopteryx who have departed. Driscoll loops around in front of the body, giving it a wide berth.

But suddenly it starts to turn. Driscoll's mouth falls open, his eyes dilate with terror, the carcass is moving, rolling it seems, Driscoll dives behind a bush as it comes towards him and now he hears the slow gentle rumble of maggots feeding on it, the maggots different from beetles, juices flowing from their skins, they dissolve their way through the meat, turning it into fluid, then sucking it up again. And as the meat dissolves, as the dead tissue disappears in one continuous million-mouthed feeding, the corpse shakes and appears to come alive again.

Driscoll turns to run, then ducks out of the way, crabs larger than life, great giant land crabs are also moving in now on the carcass, their claws jabbing at the eyeballs that still remain from Kong's kill. The chattering of the claws coupled with the liquid rumble of the maggots is pulverizing. Driscoll freezes, a statue. From the distance, the roar of Kong, a tree crashing somewhere. Driscoll forces himself to move on.

227 FIELDS AND MARSHLAND

227

Tall grass and wild wheat, a weirdly cultivated place, non-sensical in this prehistoric world, but there it is, serene and beautiful, only mountain outcroppings along the side. And rising out of the mist and the sunshine, Skull Mountain.

228 SKULL MOUNTAIN

228

Not the exact shape of a skull, more massive, threatening, an enormous geological monstrosity, yet beautiful, with its accidents of contour, openings and closings all about, secrets everywhere.

And now, moving along the perimeter of the meadows at the base of the mountain, through this rich pasture, is Kong, Ann cradled gently in his arm. As he moves, he snatches patches of grass, munches them as he goes. But Kong and Ann seem far away, a distant team, refugees from the forest, heading now for the high country.

In the f.g. Driscoll, moving doggedly, whipped by the terrain, not at one with it like Kong.

229 INT. KONG'S CAVE

229

Kong enters with Ann under his arm.

230 CAVE - KONG'S POINT OF VIEW

230

A vision from Dante, mists rising over a bottomless pool, the cavern thrusting overhead like a great airplane hangar, the walls arching in parabolas, the light fighting its way through, trying to illuminate the place from the cave mouth at the bottom and a ledge at the top, soaring buttresses inside, yet mostly shadow, cool shadow, a cool, dark, safe place.

231 KONG AND ANN

231

profiled against the entrance to the cave. Way past them, in the meadows beyond, a dot -- Driscoll.

232 CAVE

232

Kong stopping by the pool, he sets Ann down, splashes water on his face, drinks. He stands up, reaches into a crevice in the wall, coconuts and mangoes and palm leaves fall. He mashes a coconut against the wall of the cave, drinks.

233 ANN

233

Watching him, she has a weird sense of safety now, a feeling he won't hurt her, but the terror is always there, numbing, she is the one that seems robot-like -- but at this instant, as he keeps smashing coconuts and drinking, he looks strangely human.

234 KONG

234

He leans down to Ann, his great paw holds out twenty coconuts to her, she sees them all pulverized, the meat a mash of white-wash spilling over his hand. She turns away. He looks at her, then swallows the whole pulpy mass in his hand.

235 ANN

235

looking upwards to the shafts of light admitted through the ledge at the top of the cave, now back at Kong, who is squatting down to drink. She huddles against the side of the cave, rubs her arms, her teeth begin to chatter, the cold is getting to her. Ann lies down, pulls her chin to her chest like some soldier in Korea who has given himself up to the snow; she goes against the moss and icy droppings of the cave, making a little shelter where she can die.

236 ANGLE ON KONG

236

watching Ann, looking at her, then away, at himself, grooming himself, picking at pieces of mud and at fleas, grooming more, grooming the thousands of insects that live off his mammoth body, the insects scurrying here, scurrying there, Kong itching himself, scratching, biting at almost unreachable places.

Now Kong looks up again, sees Ann shiver, looks away, then back at her. There are giant banana leaves in corners of the cave, which is really a hideaway, a lair, leaves and mud packed for insulation, and stockpiles of coconuts and mangoes and breadfruits. Kong reaches for some banana leaves which are wedged into a corner like newspapers and awkwardly, shambling, he brings them around to Ann and now he spreads them over her, covering her body with these immense green blankets.

237 ANGLE ON ANN

237

She freezes as Kong comes close, a reflex which is more involuntary than anything, the smell of him like the earth under a thousand gardens, every move accompanied by the noise of joints and breath and heartbeat, humanity unfettered, distilled, too much to take in at once and now at last as he

237 CONTINUED

237

moves away and gives in to one of his periodic fits of grooming and self-examination, suddenly Ann's shivering stops, she looks at the shattered coconut which lies beside her, the meat wet, the shell cracked and ready to be picked. And she reaches for it.

238 KONG - SITTING UP

238

He watches Ann, waits for her to eat, very still now, waiting to see if she will share anything with him.

239 ANN - UNDER BANANA LEAVES

239

She turns the shattered coconut over in her hand, she smells it, and then suddenly she licks the meat crazily, smothering her face with drops of juice, biting it, pieces of coconut meat flying over her as she eats with ravenous desire until she is full.

Now she sinks back, falls onto the great leaves, sleeps.

240 KONG - SITTING UP

240

Still watching Ann, he takes a whole coconut in his hand, crushes it in his teeth, sucks the juice out of it.

241 ANN

241

waking on the sound, seeing Kong, fascinated by the great jaws working. She reaches for another bite of coconut.

They eat together.

242 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG AND ANN

242

Ann falling back on the banana leaves again, prone, curling against the little overhang, drawing the stems up around her. Kong is still sitting up, watching her, his great eyelids falling like curtains, fighting to stay awake, to stay close to Ann. Now, inexorably, the eyelids shut. And he sleeps.

And so does Ann. They sleep together.

243 MOUTH OF THE CAVE

243

Driscoll crouching behind a rock outcropping, looking up towards Kong and Ann, waiting.

244 ON ANN 244
Stirring now, feeling Driscoll's stare, looking around, waking up, seeing Kong across the way, sleeping like a volcano.

245 ON DRISCOLL 245
Signalling Ann.

246 ON ANN 246
Catching the signal, coming to her feet, quietly, slowly.

247 ON DRISCOLL 247
His hand raised, motioning to her to be still, that he will come to her.

248 ON KONG 248
Stirring for an instant, rolling like thunder, his sleep suddenly troubled, now falls back quiet.

249 ON DRISCOLL AND ANN 249
Moving towards each other, climbing over jagged rock, picking footholds, watching Kong who, at every instant, threatens to come awake.

250 ON KONG 250
His breath seeming to come faster, near-awake, a snort, a grunt, banana leaves fluttering under his breath like a cyclone.

251 DRISCOLL 251
On rocks, coming dangerously close to Kong, not much purchase he slips.

252 ON ANN 252
Reacting, tempted to move, but knowing if she does, Kong will wake.

253 ON DRISCOLL 253
Regaining his footing, now almost past, looking expectantly towards Ann.

254 ON ANN

254

About to reach out to take Driscoll's hand. Suddenly a scream fills the cave, all the prehistoric terror of a million years embodied in this one sound that cuts and slashes through the cave like a scimitar, and now settles in, reverberating like kettle drums.

255 ON KONG

255

Jerking awake, his body spasms into alertness, coming upright like a building, looking up towards the top of the cave -- in the direction of the scream.

256 ON ANN AND DRISCOLL

256

Driscoll ducking back out of sight, Ann frozen.

257 ON KONG

257

Checking on Ann, seeing she has moved, looking at her suspiciously, Ann holding still, trying to keep her ground. Now Kong heaves back and roars, a bellow in answer to the scream from above, and a warning to Ann, to keep in place, to stay where she is put.

258 ON ANN

258

Settling on a rock outcropping, huddling into a niche, trying to appease him.

259 ON KONG

259

Looking up towards the top of the cave, a sound of cackling and tearing, a horrendous chopping sound, and without waiting now, Kong takes off, scooping Ann up, lumbering up a trail of rock crunched by a thousand trips.

260 KONG'S EYRIE

260

A clearing below the summit of Skull Mountain, a beautiful brushed ledge which might have been carved out of rock by a sculptor. And filling it now is a Blake nightmare -- a giant Pterosaur, the greatest winged reptile, a beak sharp as a laser beam and the wingspan of a 747, feeding on Kong's food, the remains of some carcass, the haunch of a dinosaur, bones protruding, meat hanging off a side, the Pterosaur cleaning it away.

261 ON KONG

261

Holding Ann with one arm, Kong swats at the Pterosaur with the other, a roundhouse which just misses, the Pterosaur bursting into flight, lifting off with the wind from Kong's arm, guiding him at the last moment, like an airplane curling around a pylon.

262 ON PTEROSAUR

262

Lumbering into space, its wings so heavy it has to sink to find a gust of wind which will carry it, and now it does, banking into the valley like a hang-glider, the wind coming with a whoosh, and the Pterosaur starts to make its turn to come back for Kong.

263 ANOTHER ANGLE - PTEROSAUR

263

A beautiful, but terrifying sight. In the background, the whole island can be seen, the dense growth, the clearing at the village, the Indian Ocean beyond, and directly below, hundreds of feet, a shimmering lake. And in the foreground, this horrendous glider, an amphibian whose skeleton spanned whole riverbeds in Texas and Utah.

264 ON KONG AND ANN

264

Looking up, the morning sun blazing down on them, and now a shadow starts to creep over them, foot-by-foot the Pterosaur's shadow masks the light, turning the bright eyrie into a dark closet.

265 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG

265

Shaking his fist at the sky, letting out an enormous roar, his fist coming very close to the claws of the Pterosaur, and now the Pterosaur, finding a scoop of air, rides, it, and climbs, wooshing upwards, and now the shadow clears, the light comes back, the eyrie suddenly filling with sun.

266 ON ANN

266

Relieved, falling back against the cave, sliding groundwards, shaken, relieved. A thud next to her, Kong, his head bobbing in defiance, grunting, looking over at the remaining shards of carcass, his chest filling with pride at frightening the Pterosaur away.

267 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG AND ANN

267

Resting, catching their breaths, Ann averting her eyes from the pieces of carrion still spread out on the ledge.

268 ON ANN

268

Isolated, trying to warm herself with the sun, shuddering against the side of the cave.

269 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN

269

Looking up, past her, crawling down towards her, an enormous snake, an Elasmosaurus, thirty-four feet long, the prototype of the great dragons which haunted medieval literature, its scales catching and holding the sun like non-reflecting glass its eyes hooded like a bat's, its body doubling and trebling back on itself, turning and returning but always heading downwards towards Ann.

270 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN

270

The Elasmosaurus rising up now, its neck erect as a cobra's, balancing like a dish spinning on a stick, getting ready to strike.

271 ON KONG

271

A shadow crossing his eye, just a flicker, and in one fluid motion, he has sprung to his feet and is diving for the Elasmosaurus.

272 KONG AND ELASMO SAURUS

272

Locked in combat, reptile and mammal meshed as one, layers of hair and scale entwined with each other, Kong flailing, like a mammoth wrestler, the Elasmosaurus coursing Kong's body like a Lionel train, over and under, ducking through his crotch and his armhold, more like a sewing machine gone wild, sewing Kong into suffocation.

273 ON DRISCOLL - INSIDE THE CAVE

273

Making his way up to the eyrie, finding the sunlight now, hearing Kong's agonized grunts, stumbling out on to the eyrie, seeing the struggle signalling Ann.

274 ON ANN

274

Frozen, the combatants, whipping and slashing too close to her, fur flying and scales chipping, grunts from Kong and the swoosh of the snake as it keeps coiling around Kong's body.

275 DRISCOLL

275

inchings towards Ann, trying to stay free of the fight, the snake spitting like a jet stream, Driscoll ducking, Kong locked with the snake, Driscoll almost losing his balance as the combatants fall close to him. Driscoll trying to reach for Ann, but Ann can't move.

276 KONG AND ELASMOsaURUS

276

Kong falling perilously close to the edge of his eyrie, a thousand foot drop below to the jagged banks of the lake, the snake constricting now, Kong supine.

277 ON DRISCOLL

277

waving to Ann, signalling her to move, and now moving himself, moving behind Kong, lifting Ann, struggling and stumbling with her back into the cave.

278 ON KONG AND ELASMOsaURUS

278

Kong choking now, the Elasmosaurus coiling around his neck, applying the pressure, Kong's eyes popping, he bounces off the side of the cave, getting some thrust to pull at the noose.

279 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG

279

his eyes bulging like two great brown blimps about to be launched from their sockets.

280 ON THE ELASMOsaURUS

280

feeling its edge, bringing the rest of its body upwards, coiling towards Kong's neck, layers of noose, a set of rings tightening arcund Kong's neck; he almost topples, dirt and leaves and brush flying off the ledge, bits of carrion spackling the sides of the cave, Kong trying to hold his balance, to keep from going down.

281 INSIDE THE CAVE

281

Driscoll and Ann racing for the mouth, winding down the crushed, jagged rock.

282 ON KONG

282

bouncing off the side of the cave one last time, his great arms reaching over like twin steel cranes, making one last effort to get a hold of the spinning coils of the Elasmosaurus.

282 CONTINUED

282

At this instant the Elasmosaurus pauses, to constrict further, Kong gets a purchase, he grabs, he squeezes, he spreads, the Elasmosaurus starts to loosen, Kong steps backwards and then runs forwards to get momentum and bounces the Elasmosaurus against the side of the cave.

It loosens its grip.

283 ANOTHER ANGLE

283

Kong slips his hands around the Elasmosaurus' throat.

Now he has him.

284 ELASMOsaURUS

284

whipping and flailing like a reptilian whirligig, trying to get free, but the more it flails, the more Kong tightens his grip.

285 GREAT GATE - TOP OF THE WALL

285

Two sailors, standing watch, looking out into the night.

286 ON THE BEACH

286

Feverish activity, men jumping out of one longboat, landing from the ship. Another longboat already beached, the men assembling, Denham opening up crates of chloride, others carrying ropes.

Englehorn and Denham marshalling their reserve forces to aid Driscoll.

287 ON KONG

287

slipping his grip, so that his hands separate, and now lifting the Elasmosaurus over his head, he slams it against the side of the cave like a whip.

The Elasmosaurus accordians like a train derailing, crumpling into itself, pleating.

288 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG

288

twirling the spent reptile over its head and now slamming it like a baseball bat against the rock and it shatters in half, yards of it flying over the ledge, whistling through the sunshine, and splattering on the lake below, floating on it like stained lily pads.

289 KONG ON THE EYRIE

289

holding the head and top of the body in his hand, the head quivering like a decapitated chicken. Now Kong cracks the neck and pitches it like week-old garbage onto the debris of dust and carrion and brush that has accumulated in the fight.

290 ON KONG

290

Looking for Ann, seeing her gone, he pounds his chest in rage, his great arms flailing towards the sky. He calls out with a great hunger, his arms reaching out for her. He howls again, then he turns and lumbers back into his cave.

291 ANN - DRISCOLL

291

Ann looking back up at the mountain, Driscoll pulling her on, racing through the forest into the glade.

The sun sets.

292 KONG

292

in his lair, sitting, grooming himself, ripping the parasitic birds and scorpions that live in his chest, the worms and fungi, the life that grows off him. He seems silent, meditative, picking, lifting the bits and pieces of life to his mouth. Broods. Alone.

293 TOP OF THE WALL - SAILOR

293

jumps up.

SAILOR

(waving down)

It's Driscoll! Driscoll!

294 ANN AND DRISCOLL

294

On the last leg now, Driscoll carrying Ann. They collapse, Ann out beside him.

295 DENHAM AND ENGLEHORN

295

sprinting to the gate, the crew jumps on the vine, the gate swings open.

296 OUTSIDE THE GATE

296

Denham and Englehorn running towards Ann and Driscoll, they lift them up, Englehorn pours water on Ann's face, forces it down her throat. She holds on to the canteen.

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296 CONTINUED

296

Ann comes to, sees Driscoll, reaches out to him. Driscoll struggles to his feet.

DRISCOLL

(lifting Ann)

Let's go. Let's get out of here.

The crew are stunned for the moment, seeing Driscoll and Ann lying there.

ENGLEHORN

Let's go. Let's go. Before those natives come back at us.

And he picks Ann up, two crew members grabbing Driscoll.

ENGLEHORN

We're shoving off.

He motions to six of the crewmen to be a rear guard, they hold their positions by the gate.

As the rest of the crew jump for their gear, overlapping lines "Let's get out of here! Hurry!" "C'mon, move!", everyone scurrying at once.

DENHAM

Wait a minute! Wait a minute!

He is running desperately after them.

297 AT THE BOATS

297

Denham yelling to one of the crewmen.

DENHAM

Unpack the lights! Get the cameras, for God's sake!

He dives for one of the packs, in the longboats, pulls out another hand-held camera.

They freeze, stunned by Denham's shouting instructions, bustling around.

ENGLEHORN

What the hell are you doing!

DENHAM

Kong's coming here.

He looks at Ann.

CONTINUED

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297 CONTINUED

297

Shadows on Denham's face from the fire, he is tight with anticipation.

DENHAM

Don't you understand, he wants you.

Driscoll and Ann and the crew honed in on Denham, they are in shock, they realize Denham wants to wait for Kong.

DRISCOLL

You're crazy.

And now Englehorn shatters the silence.

ENGLEHORN

No, Carl! No more! Got
to go! Got to get out
of here!

DENHAM

No! No!
(grabbing the
crewman)

You heard me! Unload!
I need lights --
magazines -- where's
the stock?! Hurry!
Hurry!

The lines above overlapping as Ann and Driscoll and crew break and take off, leaving Denham.

They are trying to organize themselves into the boats when suddenly a roar erupts from the blackness beyond the wall.

And then another roar.

298 ON THE CHIEF

298

leaping out of his hut.

299 ON NATIVES

299

instantly appearing in front of their huts at the sound.

SAILOR

(from the top
of the wall)

Kong! Kong!

300 NATIVES

300

bursting now from their huts, flying everywhere.

301 ON THE GATE

301

Other natives joining with the rear guard of the crew to swing the vine down and pull the latch closed.

301-A ON DENHAM AND ENGLEHORN

301-A

Crash! Denham and Englehorn swivel around as Kong bounces off the gate.

302 ON ENGLEHORN

302

Looking out towards the ship and back towards the sound of Kong. Realizing they'll never make it, Kong's too close, Englehorn races back behind Denham who is already sprinting towards the gate, towards Kong.

303 GREAT GATE - KONG

303

From behind Kong, as he heaves his weight against the gate, again, on the other side, natives, joined with Englehorn and Denham and Driscoll and the crew now, trying to keep the gate closed. But the gate keeps giving way, it splinters.

304 ANN

304

moves towards the scaffolding of one of the huts, looks out towards the wall, sees the gate giving way, bending, holding, but now giving way again.

ANN
(quietly)
Oh God, Kong, go away. Please
go away.

305 GREAT GATE

305

bursting open now, the natives swept away like fleas, looming up over the gate is Kong omniscient, biblical, straddling the gateway and the walls, his teeth bared, his chest breast-
ing the opening, whanging his chest with his fist, now roar-
ing, towering over the village, entering this civilization for the first time in his life.

He bellows, mad with fury.

306 DENHAM

306

yelling orders at the crew, trying to keep the band together.

307 KONG

307

running amok as the Malays do, seized by a frenzy, smashing

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307 CONTINUED

307

huts, natives spilling out of them, Kong picking them up and flinging them against the wall, the whole native population running in every direction, children running out into the clearing, mothers snatching them up from in front of the giant's feet -- a cluster of natives mounting the scaffolding, flinging their bamboo spears at Kong, he plucks them from his hide like toothpicks, the natives keep throwing them, Kong keeps pulling them out, and now when their weapons are expended, he picks up a great fig tree in the center of the square and swipes at the scaffolding and the whole thing topples like a giant pueblo, the warriors crushed under it.

Survivors are running, Kong picks up a straggler, lifts him to his mouth, the man struggles as if he were in the jaws of a whale and then he is thrown, pitched like a penny, over the wall. Pigs are squealing, sheep and chickens running everywhere, a farmer flies out of his house, trying to drive his pigs off, he sees Kong, he falls, and Kong steps on him, the imprint of his foot so great and so heavy, that the native is safe within the cave Kong has dug for him with his foot. Now Kong looks down, finds the farmer still alive and grinds him into an instant grave, twirling on the ball of his foot with rage.

Kong hurls a torch. Huts catch fire, the village becomes a blaze. An apocalypse.

308 BEACH

308

The remains of the crew launching the boats, some scattering into the waves, Englehorn pulling Ann towards the boats, Driscoll being carried and hauled by other crewmen. Ann sees Denham reaching into his canvas bag for his ethyl chloride grenades. He attaches them to his rifle.

309 ANOTHER ANGLE - ANN AND DENHAM

309

A roar from the clearing which leads to the beach, Kong is bearing down on them now, his eyes dilated like suns.

Denham raises his rifle again.

ANN

Don't. Don't!

Denham looks blankly at her, at the crew trying to launch the long boats, at the safe water which stretches behind them, at Kong breaking through the trees.

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310 . DENHAM 310
fires. The shell lobs toward Kong.

311 KONG 311
His face explodes, he is stopped in his tracks, a locomotive hitting a stone wall.

312 CLOSEUP - KONG 312
choking, he pulls at a spear still stuck in his side, he grasps at his throat, he roars with agony, he brushes at his eyes, sees Ann, staggers after her.

313 ANN 313
running away from Kong but in danger of falling under him. Driscoll takes off after Ann, tackles her in the sand. Tries to lift her away.

314 KONG 314
coughing and sputtering like twenty machine guns, but he won't go down. Reaches for Ann.

315 DENHAM 315
pulling the pins on two more shells, setting them on his rifle.

316 ANN 316
terrified, frozen beside Driscoll. As Kong reaches for Ann again, Denham fires two more shells. And Kong falls.

317 KONG 317
hitting the sand, now rising up like some great dust storm, all sand and eyes, a ghost, a mummy, still moving down the beach towards Ann, coughing, choking, trying to get away from Kong, Driscoll leading her.

318 DENHAM 318
firing his last ethyl chloride.

319 KONG

319

falls, a powerful thud, rolls over, out. But his hand twitches involuntarily, reaches out towards Ann, stops just short of her. She remains by his hand, looking into that great face, all coated with sand, the teeth like pyramids.

319-A ON DENHAM

319-A

triumphant.

320 ON ANN

320

Stunned.

321 ON DRISCOLL

321

Incredulous.

322 ON ENGLEHORN AND THE CREW
In shock.

322

ENGLEHORN

Jeezus, he did it. The sonofabitch did it.

The words shatter the silence, the Crewmen look at each other, disbelieving, not able to move.

323 ON ANN AND DRISCOLL

323

Motionless, looking up at the great inert body.

324 ON DENHAM

324

DENHAM

(to the crew)

Well don't just stand there for Christ sake. Move! Get some chains from the longboat. Rope! Heavy stuff on the ship - you two - move out ... Skipper, get the cameras - let's go! Let's go! We got him! We got him!

And now everybody is running at once.

DENHAM

The door! The door! Get the natives to help you -- move it! - Move it now!

CONTINUED

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324 CONTINUED

324

Denham moving towards Kong now, coming up beside his face, As he comes close, Denham's hair begins to flare, his clothes ruffle, furrows are cut in the sand behind him by the bellows of this great beast's breathing apparatus.

DENHAM

(to Kong)

That's right, big fella, that big door's gonna be your big yacht - your own private yacht - a big boat takes a big fella, right? - and I'm gonna tow you all the way to New York City, U.S.A. How do you like that?! Is that gonna be some trip?!

325 ANOTHER ANGLE - DENHAM

325

Right up next to Kong, he touches him gingerly, draws his hand away quickly like a child with a strange animal, now growing more confident, touches him again, talking all the time. Denham is breaking off now, losing contact, the tension of the last hours getting to him, barely sane at this moment, within himself, and yet babbling without.

DENHAM

You all right, Kong baby? A little beddy-bye -- you'll see, you'll wake up fresh as a daisy!

(calling back)

Let's move, people! I want a camera position at the foot and the head! How're we coming with the lights?!

326 ON KONG'S EYE

326

Denham raises Kong's eyelid with both hands, as if he were pulling up a window.

DENHAM

Aren't you something? What a sweet sight! D'you know we're going to take your picture, kid! Movies! Talkies! Talkies of you!

Denham steps back a moment, the hair on his head fanning with the rise and fall of Kong's breathing.

DENHAM

You knock me out, kid! Love ya! What can I tell you. You're the best! The greatest! Kong, you're the eighth wonder of the world.

CONTINUED

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326 CONTINUED

326

DENHAM (Contd)

(back to

the crew)

Chains! Chains! Where are the
chains! Get with it, people!
What's holding up the chains?!

327 DENHAM

327

In the sand now, around Kong's head, he starts to dance, a wild little jig, kicking away at the sand, giggling to himself, turning and throwing his hands up in the air in wild celebration. Suddenly he stops, puts his lips right up against Kong's ear. After a silence.

DENHAM

(whispers)

Big Fella, we're gonna be
millionaires.

328 ON ANN AND DRESCOLL

328

In the longboats, rowing out to the ship with the crew fetching rope, looking back at the torches and activity on the beach.

329 ANN'S POINT OF VIEW

329

The sight surreal, the whole beach lit up like a circus, crew moving this way and that, dragging chains, pulling ropes, the great door being dragged towards Kong, cameras rolling and in the center, his face up against Kong's ear - Denham.

330 ON ANN

330

Holds on to Driscoll for support. The sound comes up of the natives chanting 'Kong, Kong,' as we go out on Ann's pained face, a tear streaking her cheek.

331 EXT. BROADWAY - NEW YORK CITY - LATE AFTERNOON

331

Crowds massing outside the Winter Garden.

332 MARQUEE

332

'Tonight - Carl Denham Presents - Kong - Eighth Wonder Of
The World'

333 ANOTHER ANGLE - STREET AND THEATER

333

Crowds milling in the late afternoon crush, cops, saw horses, vendors with balloons, the three-hour-before-curtain-time chaos of any big event.

LOUDSPEAKER (o.s.)
We are completely sold out for
tonight's performance...there are
no tickets available...we are
completely sold out ---

334 DENHAM'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

334

A pie-shaped room over the theater.

Pictures of Java, pictures of eskimos. Denham juggling a pair of phones.

The hubbub on the street outside keeps rising.

Sitting in front of Denham, waiting, are Ann and Driscoll.

DENHAM
Whatsa matter with the publicity,
Eddie? -- I've got the Winter
Garden, the biggest theater in the
world -- it's a party -- don't you
get it? -- a party for the 'Eighth
Wonder of the World'...AP, UP, Reuters
...Winchell, Sullivan...the works --
Get in touch with the studios --
Warners, Paramount -- tell them I've
got footage that's going to make
'The Lost World' look like Scarsdale
-- and here's the angle -- no pic-
tures, Eddie -- no pictures until
the moment when the curtain goes up
at the Winter Garden -- let it out,
Eddie -- all the way -- we're gonna
make millions, kid -- the lid's off ---

Hangs up.

DRISCOLL
We're impressed, Carl.

DENHAM
Impressed?! Nothing like this has
hit New York since Peter Stuyvesant.
(motions them
to a chair)
You called me.

334 CONTINUED

334

After a moment.

ANN

We've decided we won't appear unless you let Kong go back to Skull Island.

DENHAM

What?!! Take Kong back to Skull Island!!!

ANN

We'll go on, both Jack and I. Once. And that's all. And after this appearance, Kong goes home.

DENHAM

I'm Jonah and I've brought home the whale and you're asking me to send him back to sea?

Driscoll smiles.

DRISCOLL

Exactly, Carl.

DENHAM

You've gotta be kidding.

ANN

Dead serious, Carl. That was a long voyage home, watching Kong tied up in chains. Week after week on that raft, lying there as if he were dead -- all the time remembering how he was on that island. Fierce -- and gentle -- safe in that cave -- wild in the forest. That's where he belongs -- like you, here, a cigar in your mouth and your ear to the phone. This is where you belong.

DENHAM

Gotcha. I'm guaranteed 100,000 dollars in theater bookings...So I'm prepared to up your offer to, let's say, ten thousand.

ANN

I don't want ten thousand dollars, Carl. I don't want twenty thousand -- or thirty or even a million! Don't you understand, Carl, I don't want anything.

334 CONTINUED - 2

334

ANN (Cont'd)

I just want to go home and forget that I ever met a son of a bitch like you. And everything you tell the world I'm going to deny. In fact I'll tell them the truth -- how it was Jack who saved me and not you. How you ran back scared for help -- How all those gas bombs turned you into a hero....

She reaches for the phone.

ANN

Let's start with the Daily News.
There's a lively paper ---

Grabs her hand on the phone.

DENHAM

Wait a minute, waaaaait a minute -- let's not lose our heads here. We're all friends, aren't we?

DRISCOLL

No.

DENHAM

(to Ann)

Admit we've been through a lot together, kid...a long way from Sloppy Louie's, right? -- and face up to it, as of tonight, your picture's going to be on the front page of every newspaper in the world -- what a shame to throw it all away -- all the years of drama lessons, and dance classes -- plus fifteen thousand dollars....

Dead silence in the room. Denham looks at Driscoll, Denham nodding knowledgeably, as if he expected Driscoll to agree with him -- to take his word for it.

But the silence lays there, filled only by sounds of the jangling phones and whirring mimeo and crowds and mounted police massing in front of the theater.

Now Denham turns to Ann, waiting for an answer.

DENHAM

What d'you say, kid?

CONTINUED

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334 CONTINUED - 3

ANN
Carl, you're full of horseshit.

334

Denham reacts.

ANN
Let's go, Jack.

And they are out the door and through the outer office, Denham running after them.

DENHAM
Awright! Awright! Twenty thousand!

But they keep walking.

335 IN THE HALLWAY

335

DENHAM
(yelling after them)
Just let me troupe him. Just here, Chicago, California. Enough to get it rolling -- I'll let you make whatever pitch you want tonight -- how one day Kong's going back to his natural habitat -- a whole animal-lover tear jerker ---

Ann stops, turns around.

DRISCOLL
Tonight is Kong's last appearance or tomorrow we call a press conference. Deal or no deal, what do you say, Carl?

He looks at both of them, Ann determined, Driscoll grim.

DENHAM
All right, all right. Deal.

Ann beams at Driscoll and they disappear down the stairs.

DENHAM
(shouting after)
I want you onstage in makeup and costume at eight o'clock.

He walks back into the outer office.

DENHAM
(to the secretary)
Get that booker in Chicago on the phone -- tell him I've got only one open date in the next two weeks....

336 EXT. CENTURY THEATER - OUTSIDE LOBBY - NIGHT

336

mobbed with ticketholders pressing to get in. Vendors sprinkled around, fighting to move their wares.

VENDOR

Git yer Kong face! Git yer rubber-
ized Kong face and make friends
with the big fella!

2ND VENDOR

Get yer official Kong program here.
Pictures of the girl! Pictures of
Carl Denham!

3RD VENDOR

Tropical juice! Tropical juice!
Right off Skull Island!

337 INT. WINTER GARDEN.

337

The place filling up, evening clothes.

338 ONSTAGE IN FRONT OF THE CURTAIN

338

A token warm-up, Balinese dancers jerking their heads this way and that to gamelan music warmed over by a Broadway pit band.

339 BACKSTAGE

339

Denham broken-field running between the stage door and the wings, pursued by a slew of reporters and photographers, overlapping questions being fired at him. "Did you capture him yourself?" "How long was the girl with him alone?" "What exactly did Driscoll do?" "Do you see yourself as the hero or Driscoll?"

But Denham is ahead of them, making straight for Ann and Driscoll waiting in the wings, Ann in a virginal white evening dress, Driscoll in black tie.

DENHAM

(between his
teeth)

Okay, good luck.

ANN

You too, Carl. Break a leg.

A Photographer raises his speed graphic.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Get between them, Carl.

CONTINUED

339 CONTINUED

339

DENHAM

No no, wait for Kong. Ann and Kong. Kong and Ann. That's what it's all about.

(under his breath,
to one of his
assistants)

That's what's going to sell tickets.

LADY REPORTER

You mean Beauty and the Beast, huh?

Denham reacts as if he'd just heard it for the first time.

DENHAM

'Beauty and the Beast.' Yeah,
that's good, too.

STAGE MANAGER

You're on, Mr. Denham. You're on.

DENHAM

Excuse me, people.

Denham moves through the curtain, out in front of the audience. The curtain remains closed behind him, the band taciting, the dancers exiting. The audience quiets.

DENHAM

(his old Carnegie
Hall voice)

Ladies and gentlemen! Thank you
for coming to Carl Denham's party
for King Kong!

They applaud, shout, whistle. Denham raises his hand for silence.

DENHAM

It was a strange and beautiful
time in the East Indies. And no
stranger and more beautiful than
this magnificent creature whom I
have brought home to show you.
Terrifying, yes -- twelve members
of my group are dead -- but when
you see him, I'm sure you will
agree he still remains magnificent,
awe-inspiring, the creation of a
kind and benevolent god who, at
the same time, is stern enough to
remind us of the terrors that await
us in this world!

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340 WINGS - ANN AND DRISCOLL

340

Ann and Driscoll looking out towards Denham, trying to contain their anger.

DENHAM

-- And now with no further ado,
ladies and gentlemen...a king in
the world he knew, but now he comes
to civilization, a slave -- New York
City, I give you Kong, the Eighth
Wonder of the World!!!

The band hits a fanfare, the curtain flies, revealing the stage in depth.

341 ON KONG

341

Chained, as Ann was on the sacrificial altar on Skull Island, his arms thrust into the air, manacled to two great beams.

Behind Kong a cheap, painted backdrop depicting the jungle, the whole thing a vaudeville turn with an African motif, the centerpiece, an animal sacrifice -- Kong.

He blinks as a rainbow of lights hit him, then he falls back, tranquilized, somnolent.

342 ON ANN

342

Taking in this sight, her head jerking back with the slash of colored light, her body frozen in Kong's presence.

343 ON DRISCOLL

343

Motionless, neutralized.

344 ON DENHAM

344

Triumphant.

345 ON THE AUDIENCE

345

In shock for the instant, then a terrible rustle, and a babble, and a sense of excitement. They're enjoying what they paid for.

346 ON STAGE

346

The photographers position themselves.

DENHAM

Appearing with Kong. Miss Ann

347 WINGS

347

Ann hangs back, she can't move.

STAGE MANAGER
Miss Darrow, Mr. Driscoll, you're
on!

The Stage Manager pushes them out.

348 AUDIENCE - POINT OF VIEW

348

Seeing Ann, the audience applauds again, Denham meets Ann center stage, positions her in front of Kong. As Denham holds Ann in position, there is a grunt from Kong, the sleeping giant is alive, he looks down, grunts louder but when Denham releases Ann, he falls quiet again.

Kong still keeps an eye on Ann, Ann looks back at him, he stirs, there is a flash of recognition in his eyes, he roars, a terrible roar of agony and longing and desire all at once, he strains at his bonds, they do not give, now he sinks back against his chains. He seems quiet for an instant, tormented at the sight of Ann, but helpless.

DENHAM

All right, get in front of him,
Ann, we need you together with him.

Ann hesitates, but Denham forces her. A flashbulb pops, and with the pop, Kong is blinded, he roars, fearful for himself -- it is reminiscent of the chloride explosions -- and now as another flash pops, Ann flinches too, she is fearful for Kong as he yanks mightily at the chains, but nothing gives, and he roars still again, his cry exploding in the Winter Garden. The audience is nervous now, moving around in their seats, standing up, a random scream. The photographers look warily at Kong as he keeps alternately blinking and looking down protectively at Ann. His head bobs towards her, he's trying to reach her in some way. He can't ---

DENHAM

(anxious)

All right, let's get this over with.
We'll put some light on it, we'll
turn on the spots. Now take your
pictures -- and get the hell out of
here.

More flashbulbs start popping, Kong looking blindly for Ann, ducking his head and bobbing like a blind man who has had firecrackers explode in his face -- the flashbulbs popping, Kong roaring like mad, trying to get to Ann, trying to find comfort with her in this onslaught when suddenly all the cameras explode at once, the spotlights hitting at the same time, a torrent of light.

349 ON DENHAM AND ANN

349

Denham holding on to Ann, forcing her to stay in front of Kong for the pictures, Ann trying to get loose from him.

350 ON KONG

350

Seeing Ann struggle with Denham. In defense of her and at the same time terrorized by the avalanche of light, Kong gives a desperate pull on his bonds.

The chairs start to buckle, Kong tugs and tugs, his eyes on Ann all the time. The audience screams in panic.

351 ON DRISCOLL

351

Moving in front of Ann, trying to protect her.

352 ON KONG

352

He tugs and tugs at his chains, they are almost loose now, the chainposts splintering, Kong pulling.

353 ON ANN

353

Breaking away from Driscoll.

ANN
(pleading)
Kong!! Kong!!

354 ON DENHAM

354

Stunned, not moving, the picture unfolding in front of him.

355 ON KONG

355

One last slam and he breaks free, the crowd shattering with screams, the chains splinter, and now a terrible roar as Kong lets the world know he has broken loose. Kong, reaching for Ann, knocks Driscoll aside, and Driscoll falls into the orchestra pit, unconscious.

356 ON ANN

356

Seeing Driscoll's inert body, she gives way now, sinks down on the stage, unconscious. Kong snatches her up, holds her close.

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357 ON DENHAM

357

Running for the wings, screaming to the Stage Manager.

DENHAM
Cameras! Get me my cameras!

358 ON THE AUDIENCE

358

Bolting from their seats, climbing over each other for the doors, panic, bodies trampled.

358-A ON KONG

358-A

Swaying back and forth in the center of the stage, holding Ann in his hand, looking this way and that - no exit, only screaming people and banks of seats and enclosure. Kong is suffocating with terror. In response, he now turns, wheels and bouncing off a chainpost -- goes right through the theater wall.

359 BROADWAY - NEW YORK CITY - KONG'S POINT OF VIEW

359

For Kong, a torrent of arbitrary, indecipherable messages. Neon and headlights and noise, an urban jungle of steel and concrete, he lets out a roar which seems almost like a scream now, the shudders of his body making the neon blur his eyes, Ann in his hand, not moving, frozen with terror, nestled in the dark corners of his palm she knows from Skull Island.

360 KONG - ANOTHER ANGLE

360

looking down at Ann, looking for some clue as to what he should do in this bewildering world. The sight of her has brought him back to the world, but it is a world that is unrecognizable to him.

361 SIGN

361

A giant electric shadowplay, thousands of bulbs blinking on and off, advertising a soft drink, a bottle pouring liquid into a glass, fizz sparkling upwards, the signs flashing, and flashing, and now lighting up entirely. The whole thing a torrent of color.

362 KONG'S EYES

362

Catching the relection, blinking, blinking.

363 ON THE SIGN

363

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364 ON KONG

364

throwing up his arm to ward off the sign but it keeps
flashing, threatening him, flashing, threatening him.

365 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG

365

reaching up for the sign, taking hold of it, sparks fly, and
now he lifts it right off its mooring and smashes it into
the street.

366 ON THE STREET

366

A thousand light bulbs shattering, the street igniting, neon
fluids running like rivers, fires lighting in trash baskets,
cars and buses screeching to a halt, collisions and fire and
screams, store windows breaking, chaos.

367 CLOSEUP - POLICE EMERGENCY DESK

367

SERGEANT
All units -- all units -- Emergency!

The Sergeant looks at the board, everything is lighting up.

SERGEANT
Emergency! Winter Garden! All
units!

368 ON ANN

368

unconscious in Kong's hand.

369 PRECINCT

369

police pouring out.

370 PRECINCT GARAGE

370

Motorcycles roaring through the garage door as it lifts.

371 ANOTHER PRECINCT - GARAGE

371

Open police cars pouring out, Tommy-guns ready, sirens
screaming.

372 INT. WINTER GARDEN - DRISCOLL

372

coming to, trying to pull himself up, the place a shambles,
the street visible through the shattered wall.

373 ON DENHAM - IN A PHONE BOOTH

373

DENHAM

Yeah, Manny, everything you got.
Frezzies, brutes, the works. We'll
be shooting all night! Hurry!
Hurry -- we'll miss it!

374 SIXTH AVENUE - KONG

374

wandering down it like a lost child, cradling Ann, fires
burning up the street behind him, cars screaming to a halt
in front, sirens wailing as they come close, and now a search-
light begins to play off the top of a fire truck.

375 EXCAVATION

375

on Sixth Avenue, an all-night construction crew on their lunch
break. A deep excavation, three stories below the street,
Manhattan rock and dirt, pools of water and heavy equipment,
shoring, steel beams in piles. Lights strung around for the
night work.

376 STEAM SHOVEL OPERATOR

376

up in a corner of the excavation, on higher ground, setting
his warning light, putting his lunch pail away, tipping his
hat over his eyes, dozing off in the cab.

377 ON KONG

377

lumbering right off the Avenue, down into the excavation,
holding Ann close, moving to a mammoth pile of dirt, one
arm cradling Ann, he starts digging into it, to make a cave
for himself, his paw reaching in, the earth flying back like
shrapnel.

378 ON THE STEAM SHOVEL OPERATOR

378

stirring in the cab, sitting up.

379 ON KONG

379

hearing the sound inside the cab, steps over to the cab,
looks in.

380 POINT OF VIEW - STEAMSHOVEL OPERATOR

380

The whole window is filled with Kong's mammoth simian face.

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381 ON THE OPERATOR

381

Instinctively hits his gears, stands on the gas, starts heading for the ramp, tracks cutting up the dirt.

382 ON KONG

382

wheeling to face this dinosaur, the great shovel swinging in front of it. He swipes at the arm, tries to knock it away.

Ann wakes up.

383 ON THE STEAM SHOVEL

383

The operator working frantically to elude Kong, but he can't, hitting gears and levers like a madman, forward and reverse, swinging the arm this way and that and now as Kong charges at him, opens up the shovel's teeth.

384 ON KONG

384

The teeth of the shovel snapping at him like a Tyrannosaurus, he ducks and bobs, holding Ann close to him all the time, knocking away the arm, protecting her.

385 ON THE OPERATOR

385

swerving, rolling the steam shovel forward, making another run for it, but Kong is too fast for him, catches up.

386 ON THE OPERATOR

386

hitting a lever, unexpectedly swinging the shovel around in the opposite direction -- swat! Slams Kong against the side of the head, he goes down, cradling Ann from the fall.

387 ON THE OPERATOR

387

moving into forward gear, batting at Kong as he goes, the shovel piledriving down on Kong, hitting him on both sides of the head, not letting him up.

388 ON THE OPERATOR

388

sensing victory, sweeping in a 360 degree circle, and making one last run for the ramp.

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389 ON KONG

389

running down off the mound of dirt, he catches up the steam shovel and now he begins to force it backwards.

390 ON THE SHOVEL

390

The tracks spinning as if they were on ice.

391 ON KONG

391

pushing the steam shovel into reverse, cradling Ann in one arm, and straight-arming the steam shovel with the other, forcing the cab right back into the hole he had dug into the giant mound of dirt.

392 POINT OF VIEW - STEAM SHOVEL OPERATOR

392

feeling himself fall back into darkness in this tunnel, at the mouth of it the lights of the excavation highlighting Kong's face as he pushes the steam shovel deeper and deeper into the hole dug into the mountain of dirt.

393 ON THE OPERATOR

393

hitting at his gears, trying to get himself untracked, now operating the arm, swinging it.

394 KONG'S POINT OF VIEW

394

The arm coming towards him, the teeth of the shovel snapping at him, the shovel swinging back and swatting him one last time across the head.

395 ON KONG

395

Grabs the arm, and now, having a good hold, starts to bend it.

396 STEAM SHOVEL OPERATOR'S POINT OF VIEW

396

The arm of the steam shovel coming back at him, the teeth opening and snapping as the gears lock and the teeth keep snapping. The light is filling up with the darkness, all the man can see is the teeth of his equipment, Kong guiding them right back toward him.

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397 ON THE MOUND OF DIRT

397

Screams issuing from the cab as Kong turns the arm of the steam shovel on itself and buries the whole piece of equipment into the mound.

398 STEAM SHOVEL OPERATOR'S POINT OF VIEW

398

Darkness.

Death.

398-A ON KONG

398-A

Spent now, falling against the mound of dirt, then reflexively lumbering to his feet, making the gorilla motion., pounding his chest with one hand, cradling Ann with the other.

399 KONG'S POINT OF VIEW

399

Looming through the bright night, the tower of the Empire State Building.

400 ON KONG

400

recognizing the high ground, as if he had just seen his eyrie on top of Skull Mountain. Holding Ann close, he now scales the sides of the excavation.

401 BEHIND KONG

401

lumbering down 6th Avenue, the Empire State beckoning him.

402 EXT. WINTER GARDEN - DRISCOLL

402

receiving emergency treatment from a hospital attendant. Mobs milling in front of the theater, police cars close by.

POLICE CAR RADIO
Attention all cars...attention all
cars...Kong is headed for the Empire
State Building ---

403 ON DRISCOLL

403

Looking up.

404 DRISCOLL'S POINT OF VIEW

404

The Empire State looming over the city

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404 CONTINUED 404

DRISCOLL

He's headed for the highest point
on the island.

405 EXT. AMBULANCE 405

Denham has commandeered it, he is behind the rear doors with
two assistants, loading cameras and lights and magazines
into the back.

They jump in, the police radio squawking in the ambulance.

406 INT. AMBULANCE 406

RADIO

Repeat...Kong is headed for the
Empire State Building.

DENHAM

Let's go!

The Driver hesitates.

DRIVER

Gee, Mr. Denham, I could get into
a lot of trouble for this.

Denham slaps a sheaf of bills into the Driver's hand.

DENHAM

This'll keep you out of trouble.

407 EXT. AMBULANCE 407

Changing direction, ripping eastwards, the red light flashing,
the siren going full blast.

408 EMPIRE STATE BUILDING 408

Kong climbing, Ann in his hand, scaling floors at a time,
making it to the deck on the 86th floor.

409 OBSERVATION DECK 409

Kong perched on it, looking around, the air seeming to ease
him, the height giving him courage, cradling Ann.

410 34TH STREET AND 5TH AVENUE 410

Police cars, emergency squads, fire trucks, mobs assembling
at the base of the building.

411 SEARCHLIGHTS

411

Crews uncovering them, moving them into position, massive shafts of light criss-crossing the tower.

412 BUILDING ROOFS - MIDTOWN

412

Police marksmen taking positions.

413 ON THE CORNER - 34TH AND 5TH

413

Saw horses being set up, police piling in, in emergency outposts, one Inspector directing them all, moving his troops this way and that, they take positions, searching the sky where the searchlight beams meet.

414 DENHAM'S AMBULANCE

414

Screeching up to the scene, Denham bolting for the Inspector's command post.

415 ON KONG

415

Settling into the Empire State cupola, the mists of the night chilling, his head jitters at the passes of the searchlights. He holds Ann gently under his arm, drawing comfort from her.

416 ON DENHAM AND THE INSPECTOR

416

INSPECTOR

...We go up -- she doesn't have a chance.

DENHAM

What are you going to do?

INSPECTOR

Wait.

Denham moves back to the ambulance.

417 ON THE ROOF

417

Kong, looking down, seeing the massing mob, the jungle of equipment, a searchlight hits him, he jumps back.

418 DENHAM AT THE DOOR OF THE AMBULANCE

418

DENHAM

Get set up, Manny -- lights, tripod, whatever we've got -- he'll either throw her down or jump with her -- we want to be ready.

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419 ON THE ROOF

419

Kong hunkering down for the night, looking up at the sky, shuddering with the unfamiliar cold.

Perplexed by the lights that sometimes flash by, but searching the stars which seem familiar.

420 ON ANN

420

Beside him, silent, frozen, her evening dress torn and caked with mud from Kong's body -- she, too, shivering in the spring night, 102 floors up.

421 INT. EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

421

Police guarding the banks of elevators, as Englehorn's men once guarded the gates on Skull Island.

422 ON THE STREET

422

Driscoll appearing, bandaged, fighting his way through the crowd.

423 DRISCOLL'S POINT OF VIEW

423

Sees Denham setting up his cameras.

424 DRISCOLL AND DENHAM

424

Bore into each other, now Denham turns away.

425 ANOTHER ANGLE - THE STREET

425

A circus -- or a battlefield -- mobbed with people, more coming in, but everything still, as the night slips away.

426 INT. RADIO STATION

426

NEWSCASTER

The creature remains a hundred two floors above Manhattan, Ann Darrow his prisoner. He is out of range of the neighboring buildings, and the police, fearing for her safety, are reluctant to attack.

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427 AT THE COMMAND POST

427

Driscoll and Denham flanking the Inspector, all looking up.

INSPECTOR

How long do you think he'll stay
up there?

DRISCOLL

I don't know. As long as he feels
safe, he'll stay.

DENHAM

Well I can't photograph him up there.
I've got to get a plane.

Denham jumps in to the ambulance.

DENHAM

Let's go. Floyd Bennett Field.
Call the charter service. Tell
them to get a plane ready.

And the ambulance is gone, siren screaming, the Driver already
on the radio, calling ahead.

428 ON THE INSPECTOR

428

Regrets.

429 ON THE INSPECTOR AND DRISCOLL

429

The Inspector watches the ambulance go, leans into a police
car, picks up the radio phone.

INSPECTOR

This is Inspector Flaherty -- call
the Navy Squadron at Floyd Bennet --
tell them to get some planes in the
air....

430 FLOYD BENNETT FIELD

430

Dawn coming up over Long Island, three Navy planes revving up.

431

431

Pilots, Navy flyers, ready for action.

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432 DOWN THE RUNWAY - PRIVATE PLANE 432
A civilian pilot at the controls, in the rear, Denham, rigging himself a camera mount, piling magazines beside him, getting ready to shoot.

433 ANOTHER ANGLE - FLOYD BENNET 433
The Navy planes take off in tight formation.
Right behind them is Denham's plane, riding their tail.

434 EMPIRE STATE - ON KONG 434
Rousing himself, hearing a sound, moving about restlessly, carrying Ann with him.

435 PLANES 435
In formation, setting up a battle pattern.

436 KONG 436
looking out, moving up further, climbing the mast to the 102nd floor.

437 PLANES 437
buzzing the tower, getting a fix on Kong.

438 INT. AIRPLANE 438
A machine gunner squinting to get a sight.

439 EMPIRE STATE MAST 439
Kong, holding Ann protectively.

440 OMITTED 440

441 CLOSEUP - DENHAM 441
looking in towards Kong and Ann. Now squinting through the lens of his camera. Cranking.

442 AIRPLANE 442
a pilot leaning back to a machine gunner, pointing towards Ann. The machine gunner nods.

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443 PLANES

443

buzzing closer to Kong now, trying to intimidate him, to get him to release Ann.

444 KONG ON MAST

444

putting Ann down on the ledge now, taking up the challenge.

445 ON DENHAM

445

pressing the pilot to get in closer.

Kong is straddling the tower now, he lets out a roar that is swallowed up by the silence 102 stories above the city. Kong beats his breast, the power pouring out of him, raises his arms to the sky.

446 PRIVATE PLANE

446

Denham pointing down towards Kong isolated, and the pilot peels off. Denham rises in his seat, straddles the camera turret, crazed with excitement.

447 LONG SHOT - NAVY PLANES

447

One by one they peel off and head towards the mast of the building, point for Kong. They come dangerously close, provoking Kong with their rapid-fire, Kong waves at them, tries to hit at them, they elude him.

448 ANOTHER ANGLE

448

Kong profiled against the sky, raging against the heavens, his teeth bared in anguish.

449 SQUADRON LEADER

449

making a new pass, machine-gunning away, the bullets spraying, shattering glass in the tower. Kong waves again, tries to reach him, can't come near.

450 ON DENHAM

450

His plane coming close, operating his camera. Kong reaches for the plane, misses.

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451 NAVY PLANE

451

making a pass, banking in, firing away, Kong reaching again, missing.

452 ANOTHER NAVY PLANE

452

banking, firing, eluding Kong.

453 SQUADRON LEADER

453

banking, firing, really zipping close.

454 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG

454

almost a delayed reaction, reaching for his throat now, feeling blood.

455 SQUADRON LEADER

455

sensing a kill, banking back sharply, pumping rounds into Kong, the other planes jumping in, pouring in the lead, Kong starting to bleed profusely now.

455-A ON DENHAM

455-A

operating the camera with one hand, signalling the pilot to come closer with the other.

456 KONG

456

poking at the wound in his throat, curious for a moment, looking at the blood on his hand.

457 NAVY PLANES

457

A new formation, right for Kong, machine guns smoking.

458 KONG

458

reaching for them all at once, all of them eluding him. Denham is urging his pilot to come closer and closer, the Pilot trying to keep his distance, Denham aiming his camera for a closeup, not satisfied, pushing the Pilot perilously close.

Denham manning the camera, Kong reaches for him, hits at the plane, he gets a piece of it, a wing jars loose, the pilot loses control, it spins crazily, starts smoking, zooms downward.

459 ON DENHAM

459

falling, gripping the handle of his camera mount, still shooting film as he plunges to the street one hundred and two floors below.

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460 HERALD SQUARE

460

The shattered plane smashes into pieces at the corner of Broadway and 34th Street. Screams, flames lick around a statue, a window buckles at Macy's.

461 KONG - ON THE MAST

461

Kong reaches out in agony to the open sky, the planes keeping their distance now, the great chain from Kong's Winter Garden appearance still dangling from his wrist.

He rubs at his eyes, he cannot see, the blood is pouring down his face now, he staggers like a punch-drunk fighter, looks back down at the ledge, sees Ann.

462 ANN

462

standing up now, looking right at Kong, not denying him. Finally, carefully, with the utmost hesitation and apprehension, she takes a step towards him.

463 KONG

463

receiving her, wanting her, reaching down for her, picking her up carefully, cradling her, showing her to the world, looking out towards the planes who are banking once more.

Now he holds her out over the city, as if he is going to topple with her, she arches backwards, then he brings her back in, and sets her down on the ledge.

464 KONG AND ANN

464

Kong seems to sit for a moment, beaten, exhausted, he looks like a traged now at a military base, riddled with holes, blood pouring from all of them, his neck wreathed in blood, his head a pulp. He looks over to Ann. He tries to reach for her a last time but he cannot make it. Now just looks longingly at her, his head swivelling as the planes zoom by, now just wobbling, almost lifeless.

465 ANN

465

watching Kong, seeing him blink, seeing him look at her once more. She moves towards him, the memories of the cave and the cold and the coconut and the banana leaves surfacing, comes next to him, her hand reaches out towards his neck, the hand is immediately covered with blood, but she ignores it, she climbs up on the ledge towards his head, and her hand touches his forehead, an indescribable gesture of great delicacy and understanding,

CONTINUED

465 CONTINUED

465

he blinks, he seems to nod, he looks towards her, a moan seems to ooze out of him and now with his last drop of strength; he leaves her.

Climbs once more to the mast, looks back a last time at Ann, and then goes to the very top.

466 LONG SHOT - KONG

466

just straddling the mast with his legs like a circus performer, the planes coming close, he raises his arms as if he were imploring the sky for something, the heavens, some far off place of his unconscious, some god he worships, and now his whole body is exposed and the planes swoop in for the kill, hammering, hammering at him, he seems to topple, but then he is upright again.

467 ANOTHER ANGLE - KONG

467

He beats his breast, he roars, looks back at Ann.

Then he topples.

468 LONG SHOT - EMPIRE STATE BUILDING

468

Kong going down, hitting the side of the building, once, twice, three times.

469 34TH STREET

469

Kong hitting the street, the pavement cracks open, the whole street explodes, gushers of water, a tangle of wires, the asphalt guts like the innards of a human body and finally Kong comes to rest, in his grave below the street, trapped in telephone and electrical cable, water running over him from broken pipes. A fire flashes from an electrical conduit, it sears his eye, his blood boils, he is dead.

470 EMPIRE STATE - CUPOLA

470

Driscoll arriving with the Inspector. They find Ann, her white dress covered with blood, pieces of hair all around, she is in shock, spread-eagled against the side of the building.

She doesn't move. The Inspector doesn't move. Nobody moves.

The Inspector backs off. Driscoll waits.

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471 STREET

471

crowds around Kong's concrete grave. Cops with arms linked trying to hold the crowds back.

Reporters trying to push past. All talking at once. Taking pictures.

472 CLOSEUP - KONG

472

lifeless, his eyes looking skywards, fork-lifts moving in, fire engines dropping ladders, bodies climbing over the body.

473 LADY REPORTER AND LIEUTENANT

473

The Lady Reporter comes abreast of a Lieutenant now, a ring of cops have circled the grave.

LIEUTENANT
The airplanes got him.

LADY REPORTER
Oh no officer -- it wasn't the
airplanes. It was beauty killed
the beast.

474 ANOTHER ANGLE - WIDER

474

The Empire State Building towering over the scene, down closer a jungle of equipment, crowds milling like bees.

Push in now, past the building, past the equipment, the fire trucks and the squad cars and the ambulances, past the police trying to contain the crowds, past the gaping onlookers, past the Lieutenant and the Lady Reporter to Kong's broken lifeless body, bound in crumpled asphalt and broken pipes and torn electric wires -- past the wires and the pipes and the asphalt, into his face.

Quiet, still, at peace.

FADE OUT

THE END